

A PAGEANT,

AND

OTHER POEMS



A P A G E A N T

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BY

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

London

MACMILLAN AND CO.

881

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THE KEY-NOTE.

WHERE are the songs I used to know,
Where are the notes I used to sing?

I have forgotten everything
I used to know so long ago ;
Summer has followed after Spring ;
Now Autumn is so shrunk and sére,
I scarcely think a sadder thing
Can be the Winter of my year.

Yet Robin sings through Winter's rest,
When bushes put their berries on ;
While they their ruddy jewels don,
He sings out of a ruddy breast ;

The hips and haws and ruddy breast
Make one spot warm where snowflakes lie,
They break and cheer the unlovely rest
Of Winter's pause—and why not I ?

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He sings out of a ruddy breast ;
The hips and haws and ruddy breast
Make one spot warm where snowflakes lie,
They break and cheer the unlovely rest
Of Winter's pause—and why not I ?

THE MONTHS :

Crackle, sparkle, faggot; embers glow :
 Some one may be plodding through the snow
 Longing for a light,
 For the light that you and I can show.
 If no one else should come,
 Here Robin Redbreast's welcome to a crumb,
 And never troublesome :
 Robin, why don't you come and fetch your crumb ?

Here's butter for my hunch of bread,
 And sugar for your crumb ;
 Here's room upon the hearthrug,
 If you'll only come.

In your scarlet waistcoat;
 With your keen bright eye,
 Where are you loitering ?
 Wings were made to fly !

Make haste to breakfast
 Come and fetch your crumb,
 For I'm as glad to see you
 As you are glad to come.

[Two Robin Redbreasts are seen tapping with their beaks at
 hop about the floor, and peck up the crumbs and sugar

A PAGEANT.

thrown to them. They have scarcely finished their meal, when a knock is heard at the door. January hangs a guard in front of the fire, and opens to February, who appears with a bunch of snowdrops in her hand.]

JANUARY.

Good-morrow, sister.

FEBRUARY.

Brother, joy to you !

I've brought some snowdrops ; only just a few,
But quite enough to prove the world awake,
Cheerful and hopeful in the frosty dew
And for the pale sun's sake.

[She hands a few of her snowdrops to January, who retires into the background. While February stands arranging the remaining snowdrops in a glass of water on the window-sill, a soft butting and bleating are heard outside. She opens the door, and sees one foremost lamb, with other sheep and lambs bleating and crowding towards her.]

FEBRUARY.

O you, you little wonder, come—come in,
You wonderful, you woolly soft white lamb :
' You, panting mother ewe, come too,

THE MONTHS:

And lead that tottering twin
Safe in :
Bring all your bleating kith and kin,
Except the horny ram.

[February opens a second door in the background, and the little flock files through into a warm and sheltered compartment out of sight.]

The lambkin tottering in its walk
With just a fleece to wear ;
The snowdrop drooping on its stalk
So slender,—
Snowdrop and lamb, a pretty pair,
Braving the cold for our delight,
Both white,
Both tender.

[A rattling of doors and windows ; branches seen without, tossing violently to and fro.]

How the doors rattle, and the branches sway !
Here's brother March comes whirling on his way
With winds that eddy and sing :—

[She turns the handle of the door, which bursts open, and discloses March hastening up, both hands full of violets and anemones.]

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FEBRUARY.

- O you, you little wonder, come—come in,
• You wonderful, you woolly soft white lamb :
• You panting mother ewe, come too,

THE MONTHS:

I drive ocean ashore
With rush and roar,
And he cannot say me nay :
My harpstrings all
Are the forests tall,
Making music when I play.
And as others perforce,
So I on my course
Run and needs must run,
With sap on the mount
And buds past count
And rivers and clouds and sun,
With seasons and breath
And time and death
And all that has yet begun.

[Before March has done speaking, a voice is heard approaching, accompanied by a twittering of birds. April comes along singing, and stands outside and out of sight to finish her song.]

APRIL.

[Outside.]

Pretty little three
Sparrows in a tree,
Light upon the wing ;
Though you cannot sing
You can chirp of Spring :

Chirp of Spring to me,
Sparrows, from your tree.

Never mind the showers,
Chirp about the flowers
While you build a nest :
Straws from east and west,
Feathers from your breast,
Make the snuggest bowers
In a world of flowers.

You must dart away
From the chosen spray,
You intrusive third
Extra little bird,
Join the unwedded herd !
These have done with play,
And must work to-day.

APRIL.

[Appearing at the open door.]

Good-morrow and good-bye : if others fly,
Of all the flying months you're the most flying.

MARCH.

You're hope and sweetness, April.

APRIL.

Birth means dying;

As wings and wind mean flying ;
 So you and I and all things fly or die ;
 And sometimes I sit sighing to think of dying.
 But meanwhile I've a rainbow in my showers,
 And a lapful of flowers,
 And these dear nestlings aged three hours ;
 And here's their mother sitting,
 Their father's merely flitting
 To find their breakfast somewhere in my bowers.

[As she speaks April shows March her apron full of flowers
 and nest full of birds. March wanders away into the
 grounds. April, without entering the cottage, hangs over
 the hungry nestlings watching them.]

APRIL.

What beaks you have, you funny things,
 What voices shrill and weak ;
 Who'd think that anything that sings
 Could sing through such a beak ?
 Yet you'll be nightingales one day,
 And charm the country side,
 When I'm away and far away
 And May is queen and bride.

A PAGEANT.

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Sparrows, from your tree.

Never mind the showers,
Chirp about the flowers
While you build a nest :
Straws from east and west,
Feathers from your breast,
Make the snuggest bovers •
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You're hope and sweetness, April.

THE MONTHS :

“Here are my buds of lily and of rose,
And here’s my namesake blossom may ;
And from a watery spot
See here forget-me-not,
With all that blows
To-day.

Hark to my linnets from the hedges green,
Blackbird and lark and thrush and dove,
And every nightingale
And cuckoo tells its tale,
And all they mean
Is love.

[June appears at the further end of the garden, coming slowly
towards May, who, seeing her, exclaims]

MAY.

Surely you’re come too early, sister June.

JUNE.

Indeed I feel as if I came too soon
To round your young May moon
And set the world a-gasping at my noon.
Yet come I must. So here are strawberries .
Sun-flushed and sweet, as many as you please ;

And here are full-blown roses by the score,
More roses, and yet more.

[May, eating strawberries, withdraws among the flower beds.]

JUNE.

The sun does all my long day's work for me,
Raises and ripens everything;
I need but sit beneath a leafy tree
And watch and sing.

[Seats herself in the shadow of a laburnum.]

Or if I'm lulled by note of bird and bee,
Or lulled by noontide's silence deep,
I need but nestle down beneath my tree
And drop asleep.

[June falls asleep; and is not awakened by the voice of July,
who behind the scenes is heard half singing, half calling.]

JULY.

[Behind the scenes.]

Blue flags, yellow flags, flags all freckled,
Which will you take? yellow, blue, speckled!
Take which you will, speckled, blue, yellow,
Each in its way has not a fellow.

[Enter July, a basket of many-coloured irises slung upon his shoulders, a bunch of ripe grass in one hand, and a plate piled full of peaches balanced upon the other. He steals up to June, and tickles her with the grass. She wakes.]

JUNE.

What, here already?

JULY.

Nay, my tryst is kept;
 The longest day slipped by you while you slept.
 I've brought you one curved pyramid of bloom,
 [Hands her the plate.
 Not flowers but peaches, gathered where the bees,
 As downy, bask and boom
 In sunshine and in gloom of trees.
 But get you in, a storm is at my heels;
 The whirlwind whistles and wheels,
 Lightning flashes and thunder peals,
 Flying and following hard upon my heels.

[June takes shelter in a thickly-woven arbour.]

JULY.

The roar of a storm sweeps up
 From the east to the lurid west,
 The darkening sky, like a cup,
 Is filled with rain to the brink;

And here are full-blown roses by the score,
More roses, and yet more.

May, eating strawberries, withdraws among the flower beds.]

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Raises and ripens everything ;
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[Seats herself in the shadow of a laburnum.

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• who behind the scenes is heard half singing, half calling.]

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Blue flags, yellow flags, flags all freckled,
Which will you take? yellow, blue, speckled !
Take which you will, speckled, blue, yellow,
Each in its way has not a fellow.

THE MONTHS :

And earth and air both smell as sweet as balm
In their recovered calm,
And that they owe to me.

[Júly retires into a shrubbery.]

AUGUST.

Wheat sways heavy, oats are airy,
Barley bows a graceful head,
Short and small shoots up canary,
Each of these is some one's bread ;
Bread for man or bread for beast,
Or at very least
A bird's 'savoury feast.

Men are brethren of each other,
One in flesh and one in food ;
And a sort of foster brother
Is the litter, or the brood,
Of that folk in fur or feather,
Who, with men together,
Breast the wind and weather.

[August descries September toiling across the lawn.

AUGUST.

My 'harvest home is ended ; and I spy
September drawing nigh

With the first thought of Autumn in her eye,
 And the first sigh
 Of Autumn wind among her locks that fly.

[September arrives, carrying upon her head a basket heaped
 high with fruit.]

SEPTEMBER.

Unload me, brother. I have brought a few
 Plums and these pears for you,
 A dozen kinds of apples, one or two
 Melons, some figs all bursting through
 Their skins, and pearled with dew
 These damsons violet-blue.

[While September is speaking, August lifts the basket to the
 ground, selects various fruits, and withdraws slowly along
 the gravel walk, eating a pear as he goes.]

SEPTEMBER.

My song is half a sigh
 Because my green leaves die ;
 Sweet are my fruits, but all my leaves are dying ;
 And well may Autumn sigh,
 And well may I
 Who watch the sere leaves flying.

[THE MONTHS:

'My leaves that fade and fall,
 I note you one and all;
 I call you, and the Autumn wind is calling,
 Lamenting for your fall,
 And for the pall
 You spread on earth in falling.

And here's a song of flowers to suit such hours:
 A song of the last lilies, the last flowers,
 Amid my withering bowers.

In the sunny garden bed
 Lilies look so pale,
 Lilies droop the head
 In the shady grassy vale;
 If all alike they pine
 In shade and in shine,
 If everywhere they grieve,
 Where will lilies live?

[October enters briskly, some leafy twigs bearing different
 sorts of nuts in one hand, and a long ripe hop-bine trail-
 ing after him from the other. A dahlia is stuck in his
 buttonhole.]

OCTOBER.

Nay, cheer up sister. Life is not quite over;
 Even if the year has done with corn and clover,

With the first thought of Autumn in her eye,
 And the first sigh
 Of Autumn wind among her locks that fly.

[September arrives, carrying upon her head a basket heaped
 high with fruit.]

SEPTEMBER.

Unload me, brother. I have brought a few
 Plums and these pears for you,
 A dozen kinds of apples, one or two
 Melons, some figs all bursting through
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 And well may I
 Who watch the sere leaves flying.

THE MONTHS:

OCTOBER.

Here comes my youngest sister, looking dim
 And grim,
 With dismal ways.
 'What cheer', November?

NOVEMBER.

[Entering and shutting the door.]

Nought have I to bring
 Tramping a-chill and shivering,
 Except these pine-cones for a blaze,—
 Except a fog which follows,
 And stuffs up all the hollows,—
 Except a hoar frost here and there,—
 Except some shooting stars
 Which dart their luminous cars
 Trackless and noiseless through the keen night air.

[October, shrugging his shoulders, withdraws into the background, while November throws her pine cones on the fire, and sits down listlessly.]

NOVEMBER.

The earth lies fast asleep, grown tired
 Of all that's high or deep ;
 " There's nought desired and nought required
 Save a sleep.

I rock the cradle of the earth,
• I lull her with a sigh ;
And know that she will wake to mirth
• By and by.

[Through the window December is seen running and leaping in the direction of the door. He knocks.]

NOVEMBER.

[Calls out without rising.]

Ah, here's my youngest brother come at last :
Come in, December.

[He opens the door and enters, loaded with evergreens in berry, etc.]

• NOVEMBER.

Come, and shut the door,
For now it's snowing fast ;
• It snows, and will snow more and more ;
Don't let it drift in on the floor.
But you, you're all aglow ; how can you be
Rosy and warm and smiling in the cold ?

DECEMBER.

Nay, no closed doors for me,
• But open doors and open hearts and glee
• To welcome young and old.

THE MONTHS: A PAGEANT

Dimmest and brightest month am I ;
My short days end, my lengthening d'ays begin ;
What matters more or less sun in the sky,
When all is sun within ?

[He begins making a wreath as he sings.

Ivy and privet dark as night,
I weave with hips and haws a cheerful show,
And holly for a beauty and delight,
And milky mistletoe.

While high above them all I set
Yew twigs and Christmas roses pure and pale ;
Then Spring her snowdrop, and her violet
May keep, so sweet and frail ;

May keep each merry singing bird,
Of all her happy birds that singing build :
For I've a carol which some shepherds heard
Once in a wintry field.

[While December concludes his song all the other Months troop in from the garden, or advance out of the background. The Twelve join hands in a circle, and begin dancing round to a stately measure as the Curtain falls.]

A PAGEANT.

I rock the cradle of the earth,
I lull her with a sigh ;
And know that she will wake to mirth
By and by.

[Through the window December is seen running and leaping in the direction of the door. He knocks.]

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It snows, and will snow more and more :
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Rosy and warm and smiling in the cold ?

DECEMBER.

Nay, no closed doors for me,
But open doors and open hearts and glee
To welcome young and old.

“ITALIA, IO TI SALUTO!”

TO come back from the sweet South, to the North
 Where I was born, bred, look to die;
 Come back to do my day's work in its day,
 Play out my play—
 Amen, amen, say I.

To see no more the country half my own,
 Nor hear the half familiar speech,
 Amen, I say; I turn to that bleak North
 Whence I came forth—
 The South lies out of reach.

But when our swallows fly back to the South,
 To the sweet South, to the sweet South,
 The tears may come again into my eyes
 On the old wise,
 And the sweet name to my mouth.

MIRRORS OF LIFE AND DEATH.

THE mystery of Life, the mystery
Of Death, I see
Darkly as in a glass ;
Their shadows pass,
And talk with me.

As the flush of a Morning Sky,
As a Morning Sky colourless—
Each yields its measure of light
To a wet world or a dry ;
Each fares through day to night
With equal pace,
And then each one
Is done.

As the Sun with glory and grace
In his face,
Benignantly hot,

MIRRORS OF LIFE AND DEATH.

Graciously radiant and keen,
Ready to rise and to run,—
Not without spot,
Not even the Sun.

As the Moon
On the wax, on the wane,
With night for her noon ;
Vanishing soon,
To appear again.

As Roses that droop
Half warm, half chill, in the languid May,
And breathe out a scent
Sweet and faint ;
Till the wind gives one swoop
To scatter their beauty away.

As Lilies a multitude,
One dipping, one rising, one sinking,
On rippling waters, clear blue
And pure for their drinking ;
One new dead, and one opened anew,
And all good.

As a cankered pale Flower,
With death for a dower,

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Darkly as in a glass ;
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As a Morning Sky colourless—
Each yields its measure of light
To a wet world or a dry ;
Each fares through day to night
With equal pace,
And then each one
Is done.

As the Sun with glory and grace
In his face,
Benignantly hot,

What cares he
 For blossoming boughs,
 Or the song-singing beves
 Of birds in their glee,
 Scarlet, or golden, or blue ?

As a Mole grubbing underground ;
 When it comes to the light
 It grubs its way back again,
 Feeling no bias of fur
 To hamper it in its stir,
 Scant of pleasure and pain,
 Sinking itself out of sight
 Without sound,

As Waters that drop and drop,
 Weariness without end,
 That drop and never stop,
 Wear that nothing can mend,
 Till one day they drop—
 Stop—
 And there's an end,
 And matters mend.

As Trees, beneath whose skin
 We mark not the sap begin

To swell and rise,
Till the whole bursts out in green :
We mark the falling leaves
When the wide world grieves
And sighs.

As a Forest on fire,
Where maddened creatures desire
Wet mud or wings
Beyond all those things
Which could assuage desire
On this side the flaming fire.

As Wind with a sob and sigh
To which there comes no reply
But a rustle and shiver
From rushes of the river ;
As Wind with a desolate moan,
Moaning on alone.

As a Desert all sand,
Blank, neither water nor land
For solace, or dwelling, or culture,
Where the storms and the wild creatures howl ;
Given over to lion and vulture,
To ostrich, and jackal, and owl :

Yet somewhere an oasis lies ;
There waters arise
To nourish one seedling of balm,
Perhaps, or one palm.

As the Sea,
Murmuring, shifting, swaying ;
One time sunnily playing,
One time wrecking and slaying ;
In whichever mood it be,
Worst or best,
Never at rest.

As still Waters and deep,
As shallow Waters that brawl,
As rapid Waters that leap
To their fall.

As Music, as Colour, as Shape,
Keys of rapture and pain¹
Turning in vain
In a lock which turns not again,
While breaths and moments escape.

As Spring, all bloom and desire ;
As Summer, all gift and fire ;

To swell and rise,
Till the whole bursts out in green :
We mark the falling leaves
When the wide world grieves
And sighs.

As a Forest on fire,
Where maddened creatures desire
Wet mud or wings
Beyond all those things
Which could assuage desire
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To ostrich, and jackal, and owl :

A BALLAD OF BODING.

— We are sleeping dreams and waking dreams ;
 What seems is not always as it seems.

I looked out of my window in the sweet new morning,
 And there I saw three barges of manifold adorning
 Went sailing toward the East :
 The first had sails like fire,
 The next like glittering wire,
 But sackcloth were the sails of the least ;
 And all the crews made music, and two had spread a
 feast.

The first choir breathed in flutes,
 And fingered soft guitars ;
 The second won from lutes
 Harmonious chords and jars,
 With drums for stormy bars :
 But the third was all of harpers and scarlet trumpeters ;
 Notes of triumph, then
 An alarm again,

As for onset, as for victory, rallies, stirs,
Peace at last and glory to the vanquishers.

The first barges showed for figurehead a Love with wings;
The second showed for figurehead a Worm with stings;
The third, a Lily tangled to a Rose which clings,
The first bore for freight gold and spice and down;
The second bore a sword, a sceptre, and a crown;
The third, a heap of earth gone to dust and brown.
Winged Love seemed like Folly in the face;
Stinged Worm seemed loathly in his place;
Lily and Rose were flowers of grace.

Merry went the revel of the fire-sailed crew,
Singing, feasting, dancing to and fro:
Pleasures ever changing, ever graceful, ever new;
Sighs, but scarce of woe;
All the sighing
Wooed such sweet replying;
All the sighing, sweet and low,
Used to come and go
For more pleasure, merely so.
Yet at intervals some one grew tired
Of everything desired,
And sank, I knew not whither, in sorry plight,
Out of sight.

'The second crew seemed ever
Wider-visioned, graver,
'More distinct of purpose, more sustained of will ;
With heads erect and proud,
And voices sometimes loud ;
With endless tacking, counter-tacking,
All things grasping, all things lacking,
It would seem ;
Ever shifting helm, or sail, or shroud,
Drifting on as in a dream.
Hoarding to their utmost bent,
Feasting to their fill,
Yet gnawed by discontent,
Envy, hatred, malice, on their road they went.
Their freight was not a treasure,
Their music not a pleasure ;
The sword flashed, cleaving through their bands,
Sceptre and crown changed hands.

The third crew as they went
Seemed mostly different ;
'They toiled in rowing, for to them the wind
Was contrary,
As all the world might see,
They laboured at the oar,
While on their heads they bore

As for onset, as for victory, rallies, stirs,
Peace at last and glory to the vanquishers.

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Lily and Rose were flowers of grace.

Merry went the revel of the fire-sailed
Singing, feasting, dancing to and fro:
Pleasures ever changing, ever graceful, ever new;
Sighs, but scarce of woe;
All the sighing
Wooed such sweet replying;
All the sighing, sweet and low,
Used to come and go
For more pleasure, merely so.
Yet at intervals some one grew tired
Of everything desired,
And sank, I knew not whither, in sorry plight,
Out of sight.

To Love or Worm ship floating buoyantly :
 And there all welcomed him.

The ships steered each apart and seemed to scorn
 each other,

Yet all the crews were interchangeable ;

Now one man, now another,

—Like bloodless spectres some, some flushed by
 health,—

Changed openly, or changed by stealth,

Scaling a slippery side, and scaled it well.

The most left Love ship, hauling wealth

Up Worm ship's side ;

While some few hollow-eyed

Left either for the sack-sailed boat ;

But this, though not remote,

Was worst to mount, and whoso left it once

Scarce ever came again,

But seemed to loathe his erst companions,

And wish and work them bane.

Then I knew (I know not how) there lurked quick-
 sands full of dread,

Rocks and reefs and whirlpools in the water bed,

Whence a waterspout

Instantaneously leaped out,

Roaring as it reared its head.

Soon I spied a something dim,
Many-handed, grim,
That went flitting to and fro the first and second ship
It puffed their sails full out
With puffs of smoky breath
From a smouldering lip,
And cleared the waterspout
Which reeled roaring round about
Threatening death.
With a horny hand it steered,
And a horn appeared
On its sneering head appeared
Haughty and high
Against the blackening lowering sky.
With a hoof it swayed the waves;
They opened here and there,
Till I spied deep ocean graves
Full of skeletons
That were men and women once
Foul or fair;
Full of things that creep,
And fester in the deep
And never breathe the clean life-nurturing air.

The third bark held aloof
From the Monster with the hoof,

Despite his urgent beck,
 And fraught with guile
 Abominable his smile ;
 Till I saw him take a flying leap on to that deck.
 Then full of awe,
 With these same eyes I saw
 His head incredible retract its horn
 Rounding like babe's new born,
 While silvery phosphorescence played
 About his dis-horned head.
 The sneer smoothed from his lip,
 He beamed blandly on the ship ;
 All winds sank to a moan,
 All waves to a monotone
 (For all these seemed his realm),
 While he laid a strong caressing hand upon the helm.

Then a cry well nigh of despair
 Shrieked to heaven, a clamour of desperate prayer.
 The harpers harped no more,
 While the trumpeters sounded sore,
 An alarm to wake the dead from their bed :
 To the rescue, to the rescue, now or never,
 To the rescue, O ye living, O ye dead,
 Or no more help or hope for ever !—
 The planks strained as though they must part asunder,

Soon I spied a something dim,
Many-handed, grim,
That went flitting to and fro the first and second ship;
It puffed their sails full out
With puffs of smoky breath
From a smouldering lip,
And cleared the waterspout
Which reeled roaring round about
Threatening death.
With a horny hand it steered,
And a horn appeared
On its sneering head upreared
Haughty and high
Against the blackening lowering sky.
With a hoof it swayed the waves;
They opened here and there,
Till I spied deep ocean graves
Full of skeletons
That were men and women once
Foul or fair;
Full of things that creep,
And fester in the deep
And never breathe the clean life-nurturing air.

The third bark held aloof
From the Monster with the hoof,

On the first and second crew :
 Some with baited hook
 He angled for and took,
 Some dragged overboard in a net he threw,
 Some he did to death
 With hoof or horn or blasting breath.

I heard a voice of wailing
 Where the ships went sailing,
 A sorrowful voice prevailing
 Above the sound of the sea,
 Above the singers' voices,
 And musical merry noises ;
 All songs had turned to sighing,
 The light was failing,
 The day was dying—
 Ah me,
 That such a sorrow should be !

There was sorrow on the sea and sorrow on the land
 When Love ship went down by the bottomless quick-
 sand
 To its grave in the bitter wave.
 There was sorrow on the sea and sorrow on the land :
 When Worm ship went to pieces on the rock-bound
 strand,
 And the bitter wave was its grave.

But land and sea waxed hoary
In whiteness of a glory
Never told in story
Nor seen by mortal eye,
When the third ship crossed the bar
Where whirls and breakers are,
And steered into the splendours of the sky ;
That third bark and that least
Which had never seemed to feast,
Yet kept high festival above sun and moon and star.

YET A LITTLE WHILE.

I DREAMED and did not seek : to-day I seek
Who can no longer dream ;
But now am all behindhand, waxen weak,
And dazed amid so many things that gleam
Yet are not what they seem.

I dreamed and did not work : to-day I work
Kept wide awake by care
And loss, and perils dimly guessed to lurk ;
I work and reap not, while my life goes bare
And void in wintry air.

I hope indeed ; but hope itself is fear
Viewed on the sunny side ;
I hope, and disregard the world that's here,
The prizes drawn, the sweet things that betide ;
I hope, and I abide.

But land and sea waxed hoary
In whiteness of a glory
Never told in story
Nor seen by mortal eye,
When the third ship crossed the bar
Where whirls and breakers are,
And steered into the splendours of the sky ;
That third bark and that least
Which had never seemed to feast,
Yet kept high festival above sun and moon and star.

MONNA INNOMINATA.

A SONNET OF SONNETS.

BEATRICE, immortalized by "altissimo poeta . . . cotanto amante"; Laura, celebrated by a great though an inferior bard, —have alike paid the exceptional penalty of exceptional honour, and have come down to us resplendent with charms, but (at least, to my apprehension) scant of attractiveness.

These heroines of world-wide fame were preceded by a bevy of unnamed ladies "*donne innominate*" sung by a school of less conspicuous poets; and in that land and that period which gave simultaneous birth to Catholics, to Albigenses, and to Troubadours, one can imagine many a lady as sharing her lover's poetic aptitude, while the barrier between them might be one held sacred by both, yet not such as to render mutual love incompatible with mutual honour.

Had such a lady spoken for herself, the portrait left us might have appeared more tender, if less dignified, than any drawn even by a devoted friend. Or had the Great Poetess of our own day and nation only been unhappy instead of happy, her circumstances would have invited her to bequeath to us, in lieu of the "Portuguese Sonnets," an inimitable "*donna innominata*" drawn not from fancy but from feeling, and worthy to occupy a niche beside Beatrice and Laura.

I.

“Lo di che han detto a’ dolci amici addio.”—DANTE.

“Amor, con quanto sforzo oggi mi vinci!”—PETRARCHA.

COME back to me, who wait and watch for you :—
Or come not yet, for it is over then,

And long it is before you come again,
So far between my pleasures are and few.

While, when you come not, what I do I do

Thinking “Now when he comes,” my sweetest
“when :”

For one man is my world of all the men
This wide world holds ; O love, my world is you.

Howbeit, to meet you grows almost a pang

Because the pang of parting comes so soon ;

My hope hangs waning, waxing, like a moon

Between the heavenly days on which we meet :

Ah me, but where are now the songs I sang

When life was sweet because you called them
sweet ?

“Era già l’ora che volge il desio.”—DANTE.

“Ricorro al tempo ch’io vi vidi prima.”—PETRARCA.

I wish, I could remember that first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or Winter for aught I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it, such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand—Did one but know!

“Lo di che han detto a' dolci amici addio.”—DANTE.

• “Amor, con quanto sforzo oggi mi vinci !”—PETRARCHA.

COME back to me, who wait and watch for you —
Or come not yet, for it is over then, . . .

• And long it is before you come again,
So far between my pleasures are and few.
While, when you come not, what I do I do
Thinking “Now when he comes,” my sweetest
• “when :”

• For one man is my world of all the men
This wide world holds ; O love, my world is you.
Howbeit, to meet you grows almost a pang
Because the pang of parting comes so soon ;
My hope hangs waning, waxing, like a moon
• • Between the heavenly days on which we meet :
Ah me, but where are now the songs I sang
When life was sweet because you called them
sweet ?

“Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda.”—DANTE.

“Ogni altra cosa, ogni pensier va fore,
E sol ivi con voi rimansi amore.”—PETRARCA.

I loved you first : but afterwards your love
Outsoaring mine, sang such a loftier song
As drowned the friendly cooings of my dove.
Which owes the other most? my love was long,
And yours one moment seemed to wax more strong;
I loved and guessed at you, you construed me
And loved me for what might or might not be—
Nay, weights and measures do us both a wrong.
For verily love knows not “mine” or “thine;”
With separate “I” and “thou” free love has done,
For one is both and both are one in love :
Rich love knows nought of “thine that is not mine;”
Both have the strength and both the length thereof,
Both of us, of the love which makes us one.

5.

“ Amor-che a nulla amato amar perdona.”—DANTE.

• “ Amor m’addusse in sì gioiosa spene.”—PETRARCA.

•
O my heart’s heart, and you who are to me
More than myself myself, God be with you,
• Keep you in strong obedience leal and true
To Him whose noble service setteth free,
Give you all good we see or can foresee,
Make your joys many and your sorrows few,
Bless you in what you bear and what you do,
Yea, perfect you as He would have you be.
So much for you ; but what for me, dear friend ?
• To love you without stint and all I can
To-day, to-morrow, world without an end ;
• To love you much and yet to love you more,
As Jordan at his flood sweeps either shore ;
Since woman is the helpmeet made for man.

6.

“Or puoi la quantitate
 Comperder de l'amor che a te mi scalda.”—DANTE.
 “Non vo' che da tal nodo amor mi scioglia.”—PETRARCHA.

Trust me, I have not earned your dear rebuke,
 I love, as you would have me, God the most;
 Would lose not Him, but you, must one be lost,
 Nor with Lot's wife cast back a faithless look
 Unready to forego what I forsook;
 This say I, having counted up the cost,
 This, though I be the feeblest of God's host,
 The sorriest sheep Christ shepherds with His crook.
 Yet while I love my God the most, I deem
 That I can never love you overmuch;
 I love Him more, so let me love you too;
 Yea, as I apprehend it, love is such
 I cannot love you if I love not Him,
 I cannot love Him if I love not you.

"Amor che a nulla amato amar perdona."—DANTE.

"Amor m'addusse in sì gioiosa spene."—PETRARCA.

O my heart's heart, and you who are to me
 More than myself myself, God be with you,
 Keep you in strong obedience leal and true
 To Him whose noble service setteth free,
 Give you all good we see or can foresee,
 Make your joys many and your sorrows few,
 Bless you in what you bear and what you do,
 Yea, perfect you as He would have you be.
 So much for you ; but what for me, dear friend ?
 To love you without stint and all I can
 To-day, to-morrow, world without an end ;
 To love you much and yet to love you more,
 As Jordan at his flood sweeps either shore ;
 Since woman is the helpmeet made for man.

“Come dicesse a Dio : D’altro non calme.”—DANTE.

“Spero trovar pietà non che perdono.”—PETRARCA.

“I, if I perish, perish”—ESTHER spake :

And bride of life or death she made her fair
 In all the lustre of her perfumed hair
 And smiles that kindle longing but to slake.
 She put on pomp of loveliness, to take
 Her husband through his eyes at unaware ;
 She spread abroad her beauty for a snare,
 Harmless as doves and subtle as a snake.
 She trapped him with one mesh of silken hair,
 She vanquished him by wisdom of her wit,
 And built her people’s house that it should
 stand :—

If I might take my life so in my hand,
 And for my love to Love put up my prayer,
 And for love’s sake by Love be granted it !

9.

“ O dignitosa coscienza e netta !”—DANTE.

“ Spirto più acceso di virtuti ardenti.”—PETRARCA.

Thinking of you, and all that was, and all
 • That might have been and now can never be,
 I feel your honoured excellence, and see
 Myself unworthy of the happier call :
 For woe is me who walk so apt to fall,
 So apt to shrink afraid, so apt to flee,
 Apt to lie down and die (ah, woe is me !)
 Faithless and hopeless turning to the wall.
 And yet not hopeless quite nor faithless quite,
 Because not loveless ; love may toil all night,
 But take at morning ; wrestle till the break
 Of day, but then wield power with God and man :—
 So take I heart of grace as best I can,
 Ready to spend and be spent for your sake.

10.

“ Con miglior corso e con migliore stella.”—DANTE.

“ La vita fugge e non s’arresta un’ ora.”—PETRARCA.

Time flies, hope flags, life plies a wearied wing ;
Death following hard on life gains ground apace,
Faith runs with each and rears an eager face,
Outruns the rest, makes light of everything,
Spurns earth, and still finds breath to pray and sing ;
While love ahead of all uplifts his praise,
Still asks for grace and still gives thanks for grace,
Content with all day brings and night will bring.
Life wanes ; and when love folds his wings above
Tired hope, and less we feel his conscious pulse,
Let us go fall asleep, dear friend, in peace :
A little while, and age and sorrow cease ;
A little while, and life reborn annuls
Loss and decay and death, and all is love.

O dignitosa coscienza e netta !"—DANTE.

Spirto più acceso di virtù ardenti."—PETRARCA.

Thinking of you, and all that was, and all
 • That might have been and now can never be,
 I feel your honoured excellence, and see
 Myself unworthy of the happier call :
 For woe is me who walk so apt to fall,
 So apt to shrink afraid, so apt to flee,
 Apt to lie down and die (ah, woe is me !)
 Faithless and hopeless turning to the wall.
 And yet not hopeless quite nor faithless quite,
 Because not loveless ; love may toil all night,
 But take at morning ; wrestle till the break
 Of day, but then wield power with God and man :
 So take I heart of grace as best I can,
 Ready to spend and be spent for your sake.

12.

“Amor, che ne la mente mi ragiona.”—DANTE.

“Amor vien nel bel viso di costei.”—PETRARCA.

If there be any one can take my place
 And make you happy whom I grieve to grieve,
 Think not that I can grudge it, but believe
 I do commend you to that nobler grace,
 That readier wit than mine, that sweeter face;
 Yea, since your riches make me rich, conceive
 I too am crowned, while bridal crowns I weave,
 And thread the bridal dance with jocund pace.
 For if I did not love you, it might be
 That I should grudge you some one dear delight;
 But since the heart is yours that was mine own,
 Your pleasure is my pleasure, right my right,
 Your honourable freedom makes me free,
 And you companioned I am not alone.

13.

“E drizzeremo gli occhi al Primo Amore.”—DANTE.

“Ma trovo peso non da le mie braccia.”—PETRARCA.

If I could trust mine own self with your fate,

• Shall I not rather trust it in God's hand?

Without Whose Will one lily doth not stand,
Nor sparrow fall at his appointed date;

Who numbereth the innumerable sand,
Who weighs the wind and water with a weight,
To Whom the world is neither small nor great,
Whose knowledge foreknew every plan we planned.

• Searching my heart for all that touches you,

I find there only love and love's goodwill
Helpless to help and impotent to do,

• Of understanding dull, of sight most dim;
And therefore I commend you back to Him
Whose love your love's capacity can fill.

L4.

“E la Sua Volontade è nostra pace.”—DANTE.

“Sol con questi pensier, con altre chiome.”—PETRARCA.

Youth gone, and beauty gone if ever there
 Dwelt beauty in so poor a face as this ;
 Youth gone and beauty, what remains of bliss ?
 I will not bind fresh roses in my hair,
 To shame a cheek at best but little fair,—
 Leave youth his roses, who can bear a thorn,—
 I will not seek for blossoms anywhere,
 Except such common flowers as blow with corn
 Youth gone and beauty gone, what doth remain ?
 The longing of a heart pent up forlorn,
 A silent heart whose silence loves and longs ;
 The silence of a heart which sang its songs
 While youth and beauty made a summer morn,
 Silence of love that cannot sing again.

13.

"E drizzeremo gli occhi al Primo Amore."—DANTE.

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Searching my heart for all that touches you,

I find there only love and love's goodwill

Helpless to help and impotent to do,

Of understanding dull, of sight most dim;

And therefore I commend you back to Him

Whose love your love's capacity can fill.

DE PROFUNDIS.

OH why is heaven built so far,
Oh why is earth set so remote?
I cannot reach the nearest star
That hangs afloat.

I would not care to reach the moon,
One round monotonous of change;
Yet even she repeats her tune
Beyond my range.

I never watch the scattered fire
Of stars, or sun's far-trailing train,
But all my heart is one desire,
And all in vain:

For I am bound with fleshly bands,
Joy, beauty, lie beyond my scope;
I strain my heart, I stretch my hands,
And catch at hope.

TEMPUS FUGIT.

LOVELY Spring,
A brief sweet thing,
Is swift on the wing ;
Gracious Summer,
A slow sweet comer,
Hastens past ;
Autumn while sweet
Is all incomplete
With a moaning blast,—
Nothing can last,
Can be cleaved unto,
Can be dwelt upon ;
It is hurried through,
It is come and gone,
Undone it cannot be done,
It is ever to do,
Ever old, ever new,
Ever waxing old
And lapsing to Winter cold.

GOLDEN GLORIES.

THE buttercup is like a golden cup,
The marigold is like a golden frill,
The daisy with a golden eye looks up,
And golden spreads the flag beside the rill,
And gay and golden nods the daffodil,
The gorse common swells a golden sea,
The cowslip hangs a head of golden tips,
And golden drips the honey which the bee
Sucks from sweet hearts of flowers and stores
and sips.

TEMPUS FUGIT.

LOVELY Spring,
A brief sweet thing,
Is swift on the wing ;
Gracious Summer,
A slow sweet comer,
Hastens past ;
Autumn while sweet
Is all incomplete
With a moaning blast,—
Nothing can last,
Can be cleaved unto,
Can be dwelt upon ;
It is hurried through,
It is come and gone,
Undone it cannot be done,
It is ever to do,
Ever old, ever new,
Ever waxing old
And lapsing to Winter cold.

Johnny's face was pale and thin,
Pale with hunger and with crying ;
For his Mother lay within,
Talked and tossed and seemed a-dying,
While Johnny racked his brains to think
How to get her help and drink,
Get her physic, get her tea,
Get her bread and something nice ;
Not a penny piece had he,
And scarce a shilling might suffice ;
No wonder that his soul was sad,
When not one penny piece he had.

As he sat there thinking, moping,
Because his Mother's wants were many,
Wishing much but scarcely hoping
To earn a shilling or a penny,
A friendly neighbour passed him by
And questioned him : Why did he cry ?

Alas ! his trouble soon was told :
He did not cry for cold or hunger,
Though he was hungry both and cold ;
He only felt more weak and younger,
Because he wished so to be old
And apt at earning pence or gold.

Kindly that neighbour was, but poor,
Scant coin had he to give or lend ;
And well he guessed there needed more
Than pence or shillings to befriend
The helpless woman in her strait,
So much loved, yet so desolate.

One way he saw, and only one :
He would—he could not—give the advice,
And yet he must : the widow's son
Had curls of gold would fetch their price ;
Long curls which might be clipped, and sold
For silver, or perhaps for gold.

Our Johnny, when he understood
Which shop it was that purchased hair,
Ran off as briskly as he could,
And in a trice stood cropped and bare,
Too short of hair to fill a locket,
But jingling money in his pocket.
Precious money—tea and bread,
Physic, ease, for Mother dear,
Better than a golden head :
Yet our hero dropped one tear
When he spied himself close shorn,
Barer much than lamb new born.

His Mother threw upon the money,
Ate and revived and kissed her son :
But oh ! when she perceived her Johnny,
And understood what he had done
All and only for her sake,
She sobbed as if her heart must break.

Kindly that neighbour was, but poor,
Scant coin had he to give or lend ;
And well he guessed there needed more
Than pence or shillings to befriend
The helpless woman in her strait,
So much loved, yet so desolate.

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Precious money—tea and bread,
Physic, ease, for Mother dear,
Better than a golden head :
Yet our hero dropped one tear
When he spied himself close shorn,
Barer much than lamb new born.

Teaching and preaching,
 Never, ah never
 Making us wiser—
 'The earliest riser
 Catches no meaning,
 The last who hearkens
 Garners no gleaning
 Of wisdom's treasure,
 While the world darkens :—
 Living or dying,
 In pain, in pleasure,
 'We've no replying
 To wordless flying
 Wind's sighing.

MAIDEN MAY.

MAIDEN May sat in her bower,
In her blush rose bower in flower,
Sweet of scent ;
Sat and dreamed away an hour,
Half content, half discontent.

“ Why should rose blossoms be born,
Tender blossoms, on a thorn
Though so sweet ?
Never a thorn besets the corn
Scentless in its strength complete.

“ Why are roses all so frail,
At the mercy of a gale,
Of a breath ?
Yet so sweet and perfect pale,
Still so sweet in life and death.”

Maideⁿ May sat in her bower,
In her blush rose bower in flower,
Where a linnet
Made oⁿe bristling branch the 'tower
For her nest and young ones in it.

“ Gay and clear the linnet trills ;
Yet the skylark oⁿly, thrills
Heaven and earth
When he breasts the height, and fills
Height and depth with song and mirth.

“ Nightingales which yield to night
Solitary strange delight,
Reign alone :
But the lark for all his height
Fills no solitary throne ;

“ While he sings, a hundred sing ;
Wing their flight below his wing
Yet in flight ;
Each a lovely joyful thing
To the measure of its delight.

MAIDEN MAY.

MAIDEN May sat in her bower,
In her blush rose bower in flower,
Sweet of scent ;
Sat and dreamed away an hour,
Half content, half discontent.

“ Why should rose blossoms be born,
Tender blossoms, on a thorn
Though so sweet ?
Never a thorn besets the corn
Scentless in its strength complete.

“ Why are roses all so frail,
At the mercy of a gale,
Of a breath ?
Yet so sweet and perfect pale,
Still so sweet in life and death.”

Time not far remote will borrow
 Other joys, another sorrow,
 All for you ;
 Not to-day, and yet to-morrow
 Reasoning false and reasoning true.

Wherefore greatest ? Wherefore least ?
 Hearts that starve and hearts that feast ?
 You and I ?
 Stammering Oracles have ceased,
 And the whole earth stands at " why ? "

Underneath all things that be
 Lies an unsolved mystery ;
 Over all
 Spreads a veil impenetrably,
 Spreads a dense unlifted pall.

Mystery of mysteries :
This creation hears and sees
 High and low—
 Vanity of vanities :
 This we test and *this* we know.

Maiden May, the days of flowering
 Nurse you now in sweet embowering,
 Sunny days ;
 Bright with rainbows all the showering
 • Bright with blossoms all the ways.

Close the inlet of your bower,
 Close it close with thorn and flower,
 Maiden May ;
 Lengthen out the shortening hour,—
 • Morrows are not as to-day.

Stay to-day which wanes too soon,
 Stay the sun and stay the moon,
 Stay your youth ;
 • Bask you in the actual noon,
 • Rest you in the present truth.

Let to-day suffice to-day :
 For itself to-morrow may
 Fetch its loss,
 • Aim and stumble, say its say,
 Watch and pray and bear its cross.

TILL TO-MORROW.

L ONG have I longed, till I am tired
Of longing and desire ;
Farewell my points in vain desired,
My dying fire ;
Farewell all things that die and fail and tire.

Springtide and youth and useless pleasure
And all my useless scheming,
My hopes of unattainable treasure,
Dreams not worth dreaming,
Glow-worms that gleam but yield no warmth in
gleaming,

Farewell all shows that fade in showing :
My wish and joy stand over
Until to-morrow ; Heaven is glowing
Through cloudy cover,
Beyond all clouds loves me my Heavenly Lover.

Maiden May, the days of flowering
Nurse you now in sweet embowering,
Sunny days ;
Bright with rainbows all the showering,
Bright with blossoms all the ways.

Close the inlet of your bower,
Close it close with thorn and flower,
Maiden May ;
Lengthen out the shortening hour,—
Morrrows are not as to-day.

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For itself to-morrow may
Fetch its loss,
Aim and stumble, say its say,
Watch and pray and bear its cross.

TOUCHING "NEVER."

BECAUSE you never yet have loved me, dear;
Think you you never can nor ever will?
Surely while life remains hope lingers still,
Hope the last blossom of life's dying year.
Because the season and mine age grow sere,
Shall never Spring bring forth her daffodil,
Shall never sweeter Summer feast her fill
Of roses with the nightingales they hear?
If you had loved me, I not loving you,
If you had urged me with the tender plea
Of what our unknown years to come might do
(Eternal years, if Time should count too few),
I would have owned the point you pressed on me,
Was possible, or probable, or true.

BRANDONS BOTH.

OH fair Milly Brandon, a young maid, a fair maid
 All her curls are yellow and her eyes are blue,
 And her cheeks were rosy red till a secret care made
 Hollow whiteness of their brightness, as a care will do
 Still she tends her flowers, but not as in the old days,
 Still she sings her songs, but not the songs of old :
 If now it be high Summer her days seem brief and
 cold days,
 If now it be high Summer her nights are long and
 cold.

If you have a secret keep it, pure maid Milly ;
 Life is filled with troubles and the world with scorn ;
 And pity without love is at best times hard and chilly,
 Chilling sore and stinging sore a heart forlorn.

Walter Brandon, do you guess Milly Brandon's secret ?
 Many things you know, but not everything,
 With your locks like raven's plumage, and eyes like
 an egret,
 And a laugh that is music, and such a voice to sing.

Nelly Knollys, she is fair, but she is not fairer
Than fairest Milly Brandon was before she turned
so pale :

Oh, but Nelly's dearer if she be not rarer,
She need not keep a secret or blush behind a veil.

Beyond the first green hills, beyond the nearest valleys,
Nelly dwells at home beneath her mother's eyes :
Her home is neat and homely, not a cot and not a
palace,
Just the home where love sets up his happiest
memories.

Milly has no mother, and sad beyond another
Is she whose blessed mother is vanished out of call :
Truly comfort beyond comfort is stored up in a Mother
Who bears with all, and hopes through all, and loves
us all.

Where peacocks nod and flaunt up and down the
terrace,
Furling and unfurling their scores of sightless eyes,
To and fro among the leaves and buds and flowers
and berries
Maiden Milly strolls and pauses, smiles and sighs.

BRANDONS BOTH.

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 Many things you know, but not everything,
 With your locks like raven's plumage, and eyes like
 an egret,
 And a laugh that is music, and such a voice to sing.

“Good-morrow, fair cousin.” “Good-morrow, fairest
cousin :

The sun has started on his course, and I must start
to-day.

If you have done me one good turn you’ve done me
many a dozen,

And I shall often think of you, think of you away.”

“Over hill and hollow what quarry will you follow,
Or what fish will you angle for beside the river’s edge?
There’s cloud upon the hill-top and there’s mist deep
down the hollow,

And fog among the rushes and the rustling sedge.”

“I shall speed well enough be it hunting or hawking,
Or casting a bait toward the shyest daintiest fin.
But I kiss your hands, my cousin ; I must not loiter
talking,

For nothing comes of nothing, and I’m fain to seek
and win.”

“Here’s a thorny rose : will you wear it an hour,
Till the petals drop apart still fresh and pink and
sweet ?
Till the petals drop from the drooping perished flower,
And only the graceless thorns are left of it.”

"Nay, I have another rose sprung in another garden,
Another rose which sweetens all the world for me.
Be you a tenderer mistress and be you a wariar warden
Of your rose, as sweet as mine, and full as fair to
see."

"Nay, a bud once plucked there is no reviving,
Nor is it worth your wearing now, nor worth indeed
my own ;
The dead to the dead, and the living to the living.
It's time I go within, for it's time now you were gone."

"Good-bye, Milly Brandon, I shall not forget you,
Though it be good-bye between us for ever from
to-day ;
I could almost wish to-day that I had never met you,
And I'm true to you in this one word that I say."

"Good-bye, Walter. I can guess which thornless rose
you covet ;
Long may it bloom and prolong its sunny morrow :
Yet as for my one thorny rose, I do not cease to love it,
And if it is no more a flower I love it as a thorn."

GOLDEN SILENCES.

THERE is silence that saith, "Ah me!"

There is silence that nothing saith ;

One the silence of life forlorn, ‘

One the silence of death ;

One is, and the other shall be.

One we know and have known for long,

One we know not, but we shall know,

All we who have ever been born ;

Even so, be it so,—

There is silence, despite a song.

Sowing day is a silent day,

Resting night is a silent night ;

But whoso reaps the ripened corn

Shall shout in his delight, ,

While silences vanish away. •

Nay, I have another rose sprung in another garden,
Another rose which sweetens all the world for me.
Be you a tenderer mistress and be you a wariar warden
Of your rose, as sweet as mine, and full as fair to
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And if it is no more a flower I love it as a thorn."

A singing lark rose toward the sky,
Circling he sang amain ;
He sang, a speck scarce visible sky-high,
And then he sank again.

A second like a sunlit spark
Flashed singing up his track ;
But never overtook that foremost lark,
And songless fluttered back.

A hovering melody of birds
Haunted the air above ;
They clearly sang contentment without words,
And youth and joy and love.

O silvery weeping willow tree
With all leaves shivering,
Have you no purpose but to shadow me
Beside this rippled spring ?

On this first fleeting day of Spring,
For Winter is gone by,
And every bird on every quivering wing
Floats in a sunny sky ;

On this first Summer-like soft day,
While sunshine steeps the air,
And every cloud has gat itself away,
And birds sing everywhere.

Have you no purpose in the world
But thus to shadow me
With all your tender drooping twigs unfurled,
O weeping willow tree?

With all your tremulous leaves outspread
Betwixt me and the sun,
While here I loiter on a mossy bed
With half my work undone;

My work undone, that should be done
At once with all my might;
For after the long day and lingering sun
Comes the unworking night.

This day is lapsing on its way,
Is lapsing out of sight;
And after all the chances of the day
Comes the resourceless night.

The weeping willow shook its head
And stretched its shadow long ;
The west grew crimson, the sun smouldered red,
The birds forbore a song.

Slow wind sighed through the willow leaves,
The ripple made a moan,
The world drooped murmuring like a thing that
grieves;
And then I felt alone.

I rose to go, and felt the chill,
And shivered as I went ;
Yet shivering wondered, and I wonder still,
What more that willow meant ;

That silvery weeping willow tree
With all leaves shivering,
Which spent one long day, overshadowing me
Beside a spring in Spring.

On this first Summer-like soft day,
While sunshine steeps the air,
And every cloud has gat itself away,
And birds sing everywhere.

Have you no purpose in the world
But thus to shadow me
With all your tender drooping twigs unfurled,
O weeping willow tree?

With all your tremulous leaves outspread
Betwixt me and the sun,
While here I loiter on a mossy bed
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My work undone, that should be done
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Is lapsing out of sight;
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A FISHER-WIFE.

THE soonest mended, nothing said ;
And help may rise from east or west ;
But my two hands are lumps of lead ;
My heart sits leaden in my breast.

O north wind swoop not from the north,
O south wind linger in the south,
Oh come not faving raging forth,
To bring my heart into my mouth ;

For I've a husband out at sea,
Afloat on feeble planks of wood ;
He does not know what fear may be ;
I would have told him if I could.

I would have locked him in my arms,
I would have hid him in my heart ;
For oh ! the waves are fraught with harms,
And he and I so far apart.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

WHY has Spring one syllable less
Than any its fellow season?
There may be some other reason,
And I'm merely making a guess;
But surely it hoards such wealth
Of happiness, hope and health,
Sunshine and musical sound,
It may spare a foot from its name
Yet all the same
Superabound.

Soft-named Summer,
Most welcome comer,
Brings almost everything
Over which we dream or sing
Or sigh;
But then summer wends its way,
'To-morrow,—to-day,—
Good-bye!

Autumn,—the slow name linger:
While we likewise lag;
It silences many singers;
Its slow days drag,
Yet hasten at speed
To leave us in chilly need
For Winter to strip indeed.

In all-lack, Winter,
Dull of sense and of sound,
We huddle and shiver
Beside our splinter
Of crackling pine,
Snow in sky and snow on ground.
Winter and cold
Can't last for ever!
To-day, to-morrow, the sun will shine;
When we are old,
But some still are young,
Singing the song
Which others have sung,
Ringing the bells
Which others have rung,—
Even so!
We ourselves, who else?
We ourselves long
Long ago.

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There may be some other reason,
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Over which we dream or sing
Or sigh;
But then summer wends its way,
To-morrow,—to-day,—
Good-bye!

MEMENTO MORI.

POOR the pleasure
Doled out by measure,
Sweet though it be, while brief
As falling of the leaf ;
Poor is pleasure
By weight and measure.

Sweet the sorrow
Which ends to-morrow ;
Sharp though it be and sore,
It ends for evermore :
Zest of sorrow,
What ends to-morrow.

"ONE FOOT ON SEA, AND ONE ON
SHORE."

"OH tell me once and tell me twice
And tell me thrice to make it plain,
When we who part this weary day,
When we who part shall meet again."

"When windflowers blossom on the sea
And fishes skim along the plain,
Then we who part this weary day,
Then you and I shall meet again."

"Yet tell me once before we part,
Why need we part who part in pain?
If flowers must blossom on the sea,
Why, we shall never meet again."

"My cheeks are paler than a rose,
My tears are saltier than the main,
My heart is like a lump of ice
If we must never meet again."

"Oh weep or laugh, but let me be,
And live or die, for all's in vain ;
For life's in vain since 'we must part,
And parting must not meet again

'Till windflowers blossom on the sea
And fishes skim along the plain ;
Pale rose of roses let me be,
Your breaking heart breaks mine again.'

"ONE FOOT ON SEA, AND ONE ON
SHORE."

"OH tell me once and tell me twice
And tell me thrice to make it plain,
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Why, we shall never meet again."

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My tears are saltier than the main,
My heart is like a lump of ice
If we must never meet again."

BOY JOHNNY.

“IF you’ll busk you as a bride
And make ready,
It’s I will wed you with a ring,
O fair lady.”

“Shall I busk me as a bride,
I so bonny,
For you to wed me with a ring,
O boy Johnny?”

“When you’ve busked you as a bride
And made ready,
Who else is there to marry you,
O fair lady?”

“I will find my lover out,
I so bonny,
And you shall bear my wedding-train,
O boy Johnny.”

FREAKS OF FASHION.

SUCH a hubbub in the nests,
 Such a bustle and squeak !
 Nestlings, guiltless of a feather,
 Learning just to speak,
 Ask—" And how about the fashions ?"
 From a cavernous beak.

Perched on bushes, perched on hedges,
 Perched on firm halas,
 Perched on anything that holds them,
 Gay papas and grave mainmas
 Teach the knowledge-thirsty nestlings :
 Hear the gay papas.

Robin says : " A scarlet waistcoat
 Will be all the wear,
 Snug, and also cheerful-looking
 For the frostiest air,
 Comfortable for the chest too
 When one comes to plume and pair."

"Neat gray hoods will be in vogue,"

Quoth a Jackdaw : " Glossy gray,
Setting close, yet setting easy,
Nothing fly-away ;
Suited to our misty mornings,
À la negligée."

Flushing salmon, flushing sulphur,
Haughty Cockatoos
Answer—" Hoods may do for mornings,
But for evenings choose
High head-dresses, curved like crescents,
Such as well-bred persons use."

" Top-knots, yes ; yet more essential
Still, a train or tail,"
Screamed the Peacock : " Gemmed and lustrous,
Not too stiff, and not too frail ;
Those are best which rearrange as
Fans, and spread or trail."

Spoke the Swan, entrenched behind
An inimitable neck :

" After all, there's nothing sweeter
For the lawn or lake
Than simple white, if fine and flaky
And absolutely free from speck."

FREAKS OF FASHION.

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 Nestlings, guiltless of a feather,
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 Perched on anything that holds them,
 Gay papas and grave mammas
 Teach the knowledge-thirsty nestlings :
 Hear the gay papas.

Robin says : " A scarlet waistcoat
 Will be all the wear,
 Snug, and also cheerful-looking
 For the frostiest air,
 Comfortable for the chest too
 When one comes to plume and pair."

So a mother Auk resumed

The broken thread of speech :

“ Let colours sort themselves, my dears, ”

Yellow, or red, or peach ;

The main points, as it seems to me,

We mothers have to teach,

“ Are form and texture, elegance,

An air reserved, sublime ;

The mode of wearing what we wear

With due regard to month and clime

But now, let's all compose ourselves,

It's almost breakfast-time.”

A hubbub, a squeak, a bustle !

Who cares to chatter or sing

With delightful breakfast coming ?

Yet they whisper under the wing :

“ So we may wear whatever we like,

Anything, everything !”

AN OCTOBER GARDEN.

I N my Autumn garden I was fain
To mourn among my scattered roses ;
Alas for that last rosebud which uncloses
To Autumn's languid sun and rain
When all the world is on the wane !
Which has not felt the sweet constraint of June,
Nor heard the nightingale in tune.

Broad-faced asters by my garden walk,
You are but coarse compared with roses :
More choice, more dear that rosebud which uncloses
Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,
That least and last which cold winds balk ;
A rose it is though least and last of all,
A rose to me though at the fall.

"SUMMER IS ENDED."

TO think that this meaningless thing was ever a rose,
Scentless, colourless, *this* !
Will it ever be thus (who knows ?)
Thus with our bliss,
If we wait till the close ?

Though we care not to wait for the end, there comes
the end
Sooner, later, at last,
Which nothing can mar, nothing mend :
An end locked fast,
Bent we cannot re-bend.

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You are but coarse compared with roses :
More choice, more dear that rosebud which uncloses
Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,
That least and last which cold winds balk ;
A rose it is though least and last of all,
A rose to me though at the fall.

Being full of hope and fear, and still
Brimful of good or ill,
According to our work and will ;
For there is nothing new beneath the sun ;
Our doings have been done,
And that which shall be was.

" I WILL ARISE."

WEARY and weak,—accept my weariness ;
Weary and weak and downcast in my soul,
With hope growing less and less,
And with the goal
Distant and dim,—accept my sore distress.
I thought to reach the goal so long ago,
At outset of the race I dreamed of rest,
Not knowing what now I know
Of breathless haste,
Of long-drawn straining effort across the waste.

One only thing I knew, Thy love of me ;
One only thing I know, Thy sacred same
Love of me full and free,
A craving flame
Of selfless love of me which burns in Thee.
How can I think of Thee, and yet grow chill ;
Of Thee, and yet grow cold and nigh to death ?
Re-energize my will,
Rebuild my faith ;
I will arise and run, Thou giving me breath.

will arise, repenting and in pain ;

I will arise, and smite upon my breast
And turn to Thee again ;

Thou choosest best,
Lead me along the road Thou makest plain.
Lead me a little way, and carry me

A little way, and listen to my sighs,
And store my tears with Thee,

And deign replies

To feeble prayers ;—O Lord, I will arise.

"I WILL ARISE."

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Weary and weak and downcast in my soul,
With hope growing less and less,
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Of Thee, and yet grow cold and nigh to death ?
Re-energize my will,
Rebuild my faith ;
I will arise and run, Thou giving me breath.

SŒUR LOUISE DE LA MISÉRICORDE.

(1674.)

I HAVE desired, and I have been desired ;
 But now the days are over of desire,
 Now dust and dying embers mock my fire ;
 Where is the hire for which my life was hired ?
 Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Longing and love, pangs of a perished pleasure,
 Longing and love, a disenkindled fire,
 And memory a bottomless gulf of mire,
 And love a fount of tears outrunning measure ;
 Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

Now from my heart, love's deathbed, trickles, trickles,
 Drop by drop slowly, drop by drop of fire,
 The dross of life, of love, of spent desire ;
 Alas, my rose of life gone all to prickles,—
 Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

SŒUR LOUISE DE LA MISÉRICORDE. 11

Oh vanity of vanities, desire ;

Stunting my hope which might have strained up
higher,

Turning my garden plot to barren mire ;

Oh death-struck love, oh disenkindled fire,

Oh vanity of vanities. desire !

AN "IMMURATA" SISTER.

LIFE flows down to death ; we cannot bind
That current that it should not flee :
Life flows down to death, as rivers find
The inevitable sea.

Men work and think, but women feel ;
And so (for I'm a woman, I)
And so I should be glad to die
And cease from impotence of zeal,
And cease from hope, and cease from dread,
And cease from yearnings without gain,
And cease from all this world of pain,
And be at peace among the dead.

Hearts that die, by death renew their youth,
Lightened of this life that doubts and dies ;
Silent and contented, while the Truth
Unveiled makes them wise.

Why should I seek and never find
That something which I have not had ?
Fair and unutterably sad

SŒUR LOUISE DE LA MISÉRICORDE. 11

Oh vanity of vanities, desire ;

Stunting my hope which might have strained up
higher,

Turning my garden plot to barren mire ;

Oh death-struck love, oh disenkindled fire,

Oh vanity of vanities, desire !

"IF THOU SAYEST, BEHOLD, WE KNEW
IT NOT."—PROVERBS XXIV. 11, 12.

I.

I HAVE done I know not what,—what have I done?

My brother's blood, my brother's soul, doth cry :

And I find no defence, find no reply,

No courage more to run this race I run

Not knowing what I have done, have left undone ;

Ah me, these awful unknown hours that fly

Fruitless it may be, fleeting fruitless by

Rank with death-savour underneath the sun.

For what avails it that I did not know

The deed I did ? what profits me the plea

That had I known I had not wronged him so ?

Lord Jesus Christ, my God, him pity Thou

Lord, if it may be, pity also me :

In judgment pity, and in death, and now.

2.

Thou Who hast borne all burdens, bear our load.

Bear Thou our load whatever load it be ;

Our guilt, our shame, our helpless misery,

Bear Thou Who only canst, O God my God.

Seek us and find us, for we cannot Thee

Or seek or find or hold or cleave unto :

We cannot do or undo ; Lord, undo

Our self-undoing, for Thine is the key

Of all we are not though we might have been.

Dear Lord, if ever mercy moved Thy mind,

If so be love of us can move Thee yet,

If still the nail-prints in Thy Hands are seen,

Remember us,—yea, how shouldst Thou forget ?

Remember us for good, and seek, and find.

"IF THOU SAYEST . .

3.

Each soul I might have succoured, may have slain,
All souls shall face me at the last Appeal,
That great last moment poised for woe or weal,
That final moment for man's bliss or bane.
Vanity of vanities, yea all is vain
Which then will not avail or help or heal :
Disfeatured faces, worn-out knees that kneel,
Will more avail than strength or beauty then.
Lord, by Thy Passiōn,—when Thy Face was marred
In sight of earth and hell tumultuous,
And Thy heart failed in Thee like melting wax,
And Thy Blood dropped more precious than the
nard,—
Lord, for Thy sake, not our's supply our lacks,
For Thine own sake, not our's, Christ, pity us.

2.

Thou Who hast borne all burdens, bear our load.

Bear Thou our load whatever load it be ;

Our guilt, our shame, our helpless misery,

Bear Thou Who only canst, O God my God.

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Remember us,—yea, how shouldst Thou forget ?

Remember us for good, and seek, and find.

2.

Thus am I mine own prison. Everything
Around me free and sunny and at ease :
Or if in shadow, in a shade of trees
Which the sun kisses, where the gay birds sing
And where all winds make various murmuring ;
Where bees are found, with honey for the bees ;
Where sounds are music, and where silences
Are music of an unlike fashioning.
Then gaze I at the merry-making crew,
And smile a moment and a moment sigh
Thinking : Why can I not rejoice with you ?
But soon I put the foolish fancy by :
I am not what I have nor what I do ;
But what I was I am, I am even I.

3.

Therefore myself is that one only thing
I hold to use or waste, to keep or give ;
My sole possession every day I live,
And still mine own despite Time's winnowing.
Ever mine own, while moons and seasons bring
From crudeness ripeness mellow and sanative ;
Ever mine own, till Death shall ply his sieve ;
And still mine own, when saints break grave and sing.
And this myself as king unto my King
I give, to Him Who gave Himself for me ;
Who gives Himself to me, and bids me sing
A sweet new song of His redeemed set free ;
He bids me sing : O death, where is thy sting ?
And sing : O grave, where is thy victory ?

AN OLD-WORLD THICKET.

. . . "Una selva oscura."—DANTE.

A WAKE or sleeping (for I know not which)
 I was or was not mazed within a wood
 Where every mother-bird brought up her brood
 Safe in some leafy niche
 Of oak or ash, of cypress or of beech,

Of silvery aspen trembling delicately,
 Of plane or warmer-tinted sycamore,
 Of elm that dies in secret from the core,
 Of ivy weak and free,
 Of pines, of all green lofty things that be.

Such birds they seemed as challenged each desire ;
 Like spots of azure heaven upon the wing,
 Like downy emeralds that alight and sing,
 Like actual coals on fire,
 Like anything they seemed, and everything.

THE THREAD OF LIFE.

3.

Therefore myself is that one only thing
I hold to use or waste, to keep or give ;
My sole possession every day I live,
And still mine own despite Time's winnowing.
Ever mine own, while moons and seasons bring
From crudeness ripeness mellow and sanative ;
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A sweet new song of His redeemed set free ;
He bids me sing : O death, where is thy sting ?
And sing : O grave, where is thy victory ?

But I who saw such things as I have said,
Was overdone with utter weariness ;
And walked in care, as one whom fears oppress
Because above his head
Death hangs, or damage, or the dearth of bread.

Each sore defeat of my defeated life
Faced and outfaced me in that bitter hour ;
And turned to yearning palsy all my power,
And all my peace to strife,
Self stabbing self with keen lack-pity knife.

Sweetness of beauty moved me to despair,
Stung me to anger by its mere content,
Made me all lonely on that way I went,
Piled care upon my care,
Brimmed full my cup, and stripped me empty and bare :

For all that was but showed what all was not,
But gave clear proof of what might never be ;
Making more destitute my poverty,
And yet more blank my lot,
And me much sadder by its jubilee.

AN OLD-WORLD THICKET.

Therefore I sat me down : for wherefore walk?
And closed mine eyes : for wherefore see or hear?
Alas, I had no shutter to mine ear,
And could not shun the talk
Of all rejoicing creatures far or near.

Without my will I hearkened and I heard
(Asleep or waking, for I know not which),
Till note by note the music changed its pitch ;
Bird ceased to answer bird,
And every wind sighed softly if it stirred.

The drip of widening waters seemed to weep,
All fountains sobbed and gurgled as they sprang,
Somewhere a cataract cried out in its leap
Sheer down a headlong steep ;
High over all cloud-thunders gave a clang.

Such universal sound of lamentation
I heard and felt, fain not to feel or hear ;
Nought else there seemed but anguish far and near
Nought else but all creation
Moaning and groaning wrung by pain or fear,

Shuddering in the misery of its doom :

My heart then rose a rebel against light,
 Scouring all earth and heaven and depth and height,
 Ingathering wrath and gloom,
 Ingathering wrath to wrath and night to night.

Ah me, the bitterness of such revolt,
 All impotent, all hateful, and all hate,
 That kicks and breaks itself against the bolt
 Of an imprisoning fate,
 And vainly shakes, and cannot shake the gate.

Agony to agony, deep-called to deep,
 Out of the deep I called of my desire ;
 My strength was weakness and my heart was fire ;
 Mine eyes that would not weep
 Or sleep, scaled height and depth, and could not sleep ;

The eyes, I mean, of my rebellious soul,
 For still my bodily eyes were closed and dark :
 A random thing I seemed without a mark,
 Racing without a goal,
 Adrift upon life's sea without an ark.

Therefore I sat me down : for wherefore walk?
And closed mine eyes : for wherefore see or hear?
Alas, I had no shutter to mine ear,
And could not shun the talk
Of all rejoicing creatures far or near.

Without my will I hearkened and I heard
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Such universal sound of lamentation
I heard and felt, fain not to feel or hear ;
Nought else there seemed but anguish far and near
Nought else but all creation
Moaning and groaning wrung by pain or fear,

And being familiar, have so long been borne
That habit trains us not to break but bend :
Mourning grows natural to us who mourn
In foresight of an end,
But that which ends not who shall brave or mend ?

Surely the ripe fruits tremble on their bough,
They cling and linger trembling till they drop,
Trembling, cling to dying life ; for how
Face the perpetual Now ?
Birthless and deathless, void of start or stop,

Void of repentance, void of hope and fear,
Of possibility, alternative,
Of all that ever made us bear to live
From night to morning here,
Of promise even which has no gift to give.

The wood, and every creature of the wood,
Seemed mourning with me in an undertone ;
Soft scattered chirpings and a windy moan,
Trees rustling where they stood
And shivered, showed compassion for my mood.

Rage to despair ; and now despair had turned
Back to self-pity and mere weariness,
With yearnings like a smouldering fire that burned,
And might grow more or less,
And might die out or wax to white excess.

Without, within me, music seemed to be ;
Something not music, yet most musical,
Silence and sound in heavenly harmony ;
At length a pattering fall
Of feet, a bell, and bleatings, broke through all.

Then I looked up. The wood lay in a glow
From golden sunset and from ruddy sky ;
The sun had stooped to earth though once so high ;
Had stooped to earth, in slow
Warm dying loveliness brought near and low.

Each water drop made answer to the light,
Lit up a spark and showed the sun his face ;
Soft purple shadows paved the grassy space
And crept from height to height,
From height to loftier height crept up apace.

While opposite the sun a gazing moon
Put on his glory for her coronet,
Kindling her luminous coldness to its noon,
As his great splendour set ;
One only star made up her train as yet.

Each twig was tipped with gold, each leaf was edged
And veined with gold from the gold-flooded west ;
Each mother-bird, and mate-bird, and unfledged
Nestling, and curious nest,
Displayed a gilded moss or bark or breast.

And filing peacefully between the trees,
Having the moon behind them, and the sun
Full in their meek mild faces, walked at ease
A homeward flock, at peace
With one another and with every one.

A patriarchal ram with tinkling bell
Led all his kin ; sometimes one browsing sheep
Hung back a moment, or one lamb would leap
And frolic in a dell ;
Yet still they kept together, journeying well,

Rage to despair ; and now despair had turned
Back to self-pity and mere weariness,
With yearnings like a smouldering fire that burned,
And might grow more or less,
And might die out or wax to white excess.

Without, within me, music seemed to be ;
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Each water drop made answer to the light,
Lit up a spark and showed the sun his face ;
Soft purple shadows paved the grassy space
And crept from height to height,
From height to loftier height crept up apace.

"ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE,
O LORD."

A PROCESSIONAL OF CREATION.

ALL.

I ALL-CREATION sing my song of praise
To God Who made me and vouchsafes my days,
And sends me forth by multitudinous ways.

SERAPH.

I, like my Brethren, burn eternally
With love of Him Who is Love, and loveth me :
The Holy, Holy, Holy Unity.

CHERUB.

I, with my Brethren, gaze eternally
On Him Who is Wisdom, and Who knoweth me ;
The Holy, Holy, Holy Trinity.

ALL ANGELS.

We rule, we serve, we work, we store His treasure,
Whose vessels are we brimmed with strength and
pleasure ;
Our joys fulfil, yea, overfill our measure.

HEAVENS.

We float before the Presence Infinite,
We cluster round the Throne in our delight,
Revolving and rejoicing in God's sight.

FIRMAMENT.

I, blue and beautiful, and framed of air,
At sunrise and at sunset grow most fair ;
His glory by my glories I declare.

POWERS.

We Powers are powers because He makes us strong ;
Wherefore we roll all rolling orbs along,
We move all moving things, and sing our song.

SUN.

I blaze to Him in mine engarlanding
Of rays, I flame His whole burnt-offering,
While as a bridegroom I rejoice and sing.

MOON.

I follow, and am fair, and do His Will ;
Through all my changes I am faithful still,
Full-orbed or strait His mandate to fulfil.

STARS.

We Star-hosts numerous, innumeros,
Throng space with energy untumultuous,
And work His Will Whose eye beholdeth us.

GALAXIES AND NEBULÆ.

No thing is far or near ; and therefore we
Float neither far nor near ; but where we be
Weave dances round the Throne perpetually.

COMETS AND METEORS.

Our lights dart here and there, whirl to and fro,
We flash and vanish, we die down and glow ;
All doing His Will Who bids us do it so.

SHOWERS.

We give ourselves ; and be we great or small,
Thus are we made like Him Who giveth all,
Like Him Whose gracious pleasure bids us fall.

DEWS.

We give ourselves in silent secret ways,
Spending and spent in silence full of grace ,
And thus are made like God, and show His praise.

HEAVENS.

We float before the Presence Infinite,
 We cluster round the Throne in our delight,
 Revolving and rejoicing in God's sight.

FIRMAMENT.

I, blue and beautiful, and framed of air,
 At sunrise and at sunset grow most fair ;
 His glory by my glories I declare.

POWERS.

We Powers are powers because He makes us strong ;
 Wherefore we roll all rolling orbs along,
 We move all moving things, and sing our song.

SUN.

I blaze to Him in mine engarlanding
 Of rays, I flame His whole burnt-offering,
 While as a bridegroom I rejoice and sing.

MOON.

I follow, and am fair, and do His Will ;
 Through all my changes I am faithful still,
 Full-orbed or strait His mandate to fulfil.

34 "ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE,

We give place¹
Either to other with¹ contented¹ grace,
Acceptable and lovely all our days.

FROST.

I make the unstable stable, binding fast
The world of waters prone to ripple past :
Thus praise I God, Whose mercies I forecast.

COLD.

I rouse and goad¹ the slothful apt to nod,
I stir and urge the laggards with my rod :
My praise is not of men, yet I praise God.

SNOW.

My whiteness shadoweth Him Who is most fair,
All spotless : yea, my whiteness which I wear
Exalts His Purity beyond compare.

VAPOURS.

We darken sun and moon, and blot the day,
The good Will of our Maker to obey :
Till to the glory of God we pass away,

NIGHT.

Moon and all stars I don for diadem
 To make me fair : I cast myself and them
 Before His feet, Who knows us gem from gem.

DAY.

I shout before Him in my plenitude
 Of light and warmth, of hope and wealth and food ;
 Ascribing all good to the Only Good.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS.

I am God's dwelling-place,—

And also I

Make His pavilion,—

Lo, we bide and fly

Exulting in the Will of God Most High.

LIGHTNING AND THUNDER.

We indivisible flash forth His Fame,
 We thunder forth the glory of His Name,
 In harmony of resonance and flame.

CLOUDS.

Sweet is our store, exhaled from sea or river :
We wear a rainbow, praising God the Giver
Because His mercy is for ever and ever.

EARTH.

I rest in Him rejoicing : resting so
And so rejoicing, in that I am low ;
Ye know of Him, and following on to know.

MOUNTAINS.

Our heights which laud Him, sink abased before
Him higher than the highest evermore :
God higher than the highest we adore.

HILLS.

We green-tops praise Him, and we fruitful heads,
Whereon the sunshine and the dew He sheds :
We green-tops praise Him, rising from our beds.

GREEN THINGS.

We all green things, we blossoms bright or dim,
Trees, bushes, brushwood, corn and grasses slim,
We lift our many-favoured lauds to Him.

NIGHT.

Moon and all stars I don for diadem
 To make me fair : I cast myself and them
 Before His feet, Who knows us gem from gem.

DAY.

I shout before Him in my plenitude
 Of light and warmth, of hope and wealth and food ;
 Ascribing all good to the Only Good.

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I am God's dwelling-place,—
 And also I
 Make His pavilion,—
 Lo, we bide and fly
 Exulting in the Will of God Most High.

LIGHTNING AND THUNDER.

We indivisible flash forth His Fame,
 We thunder forth the glory of His Name,
 In harmony of resonance and flame.

A SPRING

Clear my pure fountain, clear and pure my rill,
My fountain and mine outflow deep and still,
I set His semblance forth and do His Will.

SEA.

To-day I praise God with a sparkling face
My thousand thousand waves all uttering praise:
To-morrow I commit me to His Grace.

FLOODS.

We spring and swell meandering to and fro,
From height to depth, from depth to depth we flow,
We fertilize the world, and praise Him so.

WHALES AND SEA MAMMALS.

We Whales and Monsters gambol in His sight
Rejoicing every day and every night,
Safe in the tender keeping of His Might.

FISHES.

Our fashions and our colours and our speeds
Set forth His praise Who framed us and Who feeds,
Who knows our number and regards our needs.

BIRDS.

Winged Angels of this visible world, we fly
To sing God's praises in the lofty sky ;
We scale the height to praise our Lord most High.

EAGLE AND DOVE.

♀ the sun-gazing Eagle,—
 ♂ the Dove
 With plumes of softness and a note of love,—
 We praise by divers gifts One God above.

BEASTS AND CATTLE.

we forest Beasts,—
 We Beasts of hill or cave,—
 We border-loving Creatures of the wave,—
 We praise our King with voices deep and grave.

• SMALL ANIMALS.

God forms us weak and small, but pours out all
We need, and notes us while we stand or fall :
Wherefore we praise Him, weak and safe and small.

LAMB.

I praise my loving Lord, Who maketh me
His type by harmless sweet simplicity :
Yet He the Lamb of lambs incomparably.

LION.

I praise the Lion of the Royal Race,
Strongest in fight and swiftest in the chase :
With all my might I leap and lavish praise.

ALL MEN.

All creatures sing around us, and we sing :
We bring our own selves as our offering,
Our very selves we render to our King.

ISRAEL.

Flock of our Shepherd's pasture and His fold,
Purchased and well-beloved from days of old,
We tell His praise which still remains untold.

PRIESTS.

We free-will Shepherds tend His sheep and feed
We follow Him while caring for their need ;
We follow praising Him, and them we lead.

BIRDS.

Winged Angels of this visible world, we fly
To sing God's praises in the lofty sky;
We scale the height to praise our Lord most High.

EAGLE AND DOVE.

the sun-gazing Eagle,—
I the Dove
With plumes of softness and a note of love,—
We praise by divers gifts One God above.

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We forest Beasts,—
We Beasts of hill or cave,—
We border-loving Creatures of the wave,—
We praise our King with voices deep and grave.

SMALL ANIMALS.

God forms us weak and small, but pours out all
We need, and notes us while we stand or fall:
Wherefore we praise Him, weak and safe and small.

ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE, .

MEN.

God gives us power to rule : He gives us power
To rule ourselves, and prune the exuberant flower
Of youth, and worship Him hour after hour.

SPIRITS AND SOULS—

Lo, in the hidden world we chant our chant
To Him Who fills us that we nothing want,
To Him Whose bounty leaves our craving scant.

OF BABES—

With milky mouths we praise God, from the breast
Called home betimes to rest the perfect rest,
By love and joy fulfilling His behest.

OF WOMEN—

We praise His Will which made us what He would,
His Will which fashioned us and called us good,
His Will our plenary beatitude.

OF MEN.

We praise His Will Who bore with us so long,
Who out of weakness wrought us swift and strong,
Champions of right and putters-down of wrong.

ALL

Let everything that hath or hath not breath,
Let days and endless days, let life and death,
Praise God, praise God, praise God, His creature
saith.

LATER LIFE.

LATER LIFE: A DOUBLE SONNET
OF SONNETS.

I.

BEFORE the mountains were brought forth, before
Earth and 'the world were made, then God was
God: " " "

And God will still be God, when flames shall roar
Round earth and heaven dissolving at His nod:

And this God is our God, even while His rod
Of righteous wrath falls on us smiting sore:

And this God is our God for evermore

Through life, through death, while clod returns to
clod.

For though He slay us we will trust in Him;

We will flock home to Him by divers ways:

Yea, though He slay us we will vaunt His praise,
Serving and loving with the Cherubim,
Watching and loving with the Seraphim,

Our very selves His praise through endless days.

ALL

Let everything that hath or hath not breath,
Let days and endless days, let life and death,
Praise God, praise God, praise God, His creature
saith.

3.

Thou Who didst make and knowest whereof we are
made,

Oh bear in mind our dust and nothingness,

Our wordless tearless dumbness of distress

Bear Thou in mind the burden Thou hast laid

Upon us, and our feebleness unstayed

Except Thou stay us : for the long long race

Which stretches far and far before our face

Thou knowest,—remember Thou whereof we are
made.

If making makes us Thine then Thine we are,

And if redemption we are twice Thine own :

If once Thou didst come down from heaven afar

To seek us and to find us, how not save ?

Comfort us, save us, leave us not alone,

Thou Who didst die our death and fill our grave.

4.

So tired am I, so weary of to-day,
So unrefreshed from foregone weariness,
So overburdened by foreseen distress,
So lagging and so stumbling on my way,
I scarce can rouse myself to watch or pray,
To hope, or aim, or toil for more or less,—
Ah, always less and less, even while I press
Forward and toil and aim as best I may.
Half-starved of soul and heartsick utterly,
Yet lift I up my heart and soul and eyes
• (Which fail in looking upward) toward the prize : •
Me, Lord, 'Thou seest though I see not Thee ;
• Me now, as once the Thief in Paradise,
Even me, O Lord my Lord, remember me. •

5.

Lord, Thou Thyself art Love and only Thou ;
Yet I who am not love would fain love Thee ;
But Thou alone being Love canst furnish me
With that same love my heart is craving now.
Allow my plea ! for if Thou disallow,
No second fountain can I find but Thee ;
No second hope or help is left to me,
No second anything, but only Thou.
O Love accept, according my request ;
O Love exhaust, fulfilling my desire :
Uphold me with the strength that cannot tire,
Nerve me to labour till Thou bid me rest,
Kindle my fire from Thine unkindled fire,
And charm the willing heart from out my breast.

4.

So tired am I, so weary of to-day,
 So unrefreshed from foregone weariness,
 So overburdened by foreseen distress,
 So lagging and so stumbling on my way,
 I scarce can rouse myself to watch or pray,
 To hope, or aim, or toil for more or less,—
 Ah, always less and less, even while I press
 Forward and toil and aim as best I may.
 Half-starved of soul and heartsick utterly,
 Yet lift I up my heart and soul and eyes
 • (Which fail in looking upward) toward the prize : •
 Me, Lord, 'Thou seest though I see not Thee ;
 • Me now, as once the Thief in Paradise,
 Even me, O Lord my Lord, remember me.

7.

To love and to remember ; that is good :

To love and to forget ; that is not well :

To lapse from love to hatred ; that is hell

And death and torment, rightly understood.

Soul dazed by love and sorrow, cheer thy mood ;

More blest art thou than morta^l tongue can tell :

Ring not thy funeral but thy marriage bell ;

And salt with hope thy life's insipid food.

Love is the goal, love is the way we wend,

Love is our parallel unending line

Whose only perfect Parallel is Christ,

Beginning not begun, End without end :

For He Who hath the Heart of God sufficed,

Can satisfy all hearts,—yea. thine and mine.

8.

We feel and see with different hearts and eyes :—

Ah Christ, if all our hearts could meet in Thee

How well it were for them and well for me,

Our hearts Thy dear accepted sacrifice.

Thou, only Life of hearts and Light of eyes,

Our life, our light, if once we turn to Thee,

So be it, O Lord, to them and so to me ;

Be all alike Thine own dear sacrifice.

Thou, Who by death hast ransomed us from death,

Thyself God's sole well-pleasing Sacrifice,

Thine only sacred Self I plead with Thee :

Make Thou it well for them and well for me

That Thou hast given us souls and wills and breath,

And hearts to love Thee, and to see Thee eyes.

9.

Star Sirius and the Pole Star dwell afar
Beyond the drawings each of other's strength :
One blazes through the brief bright summer's length
Lavishing life-heat from a flaming car ;
While one unchangeable upon a throne
Broods o'er the frozen heart of earth alone,
Content to reign the bright particular star
Of some who wander or of some who groan.
They own no drawings each of other's strength,
Nor vibrate in a visible sympathy,
Nor veer along their courses each toward each :
Yet are their orbits pitched in harmony
Of one dear heaven, across whose depth and length
Mayhap they talk together without speech.

8.

We feel and see with different hearts and eyes :—

Ah Christ, if all our hearts could meet in Thee

How well it were for them and well for me,

Our hearts Thy dear accepted sacrifice.

Thou, only Life of hearts and Light of eyes,

Our life, our light, if once we turn to Thee,

So be it, O Lord, to them and so to me ;

Be all alike Thine own dear sacrifice.

Thou, Who by death hast ransomed us from death,

Thyself God's sole well-pleasing Sacrifice,

Thine only sacred Self I plead with Thee :

Make Thou it well for them and well for me

That Thou hast given us souls and wills and breath,

And hearts to love Thee, and to see Thee eyes.

II.

Lifelong our stumbles, lifelong our regret,
Lifelong our efforts failing and renewed,
While lifelong is our witness, "God is good :"
Who bore with us all now, bears with us yet,
Who still remembers and will not forget,
Who gives us light and warmth and daily food ;
And gracious promises half understood,
And glories half unveiled, whereon to set
Our heart of hearts and eyes of our desire ;
Uplifting us to longing and to love,
Luring us upward from this world of mire,
Urging us to press on and mount above
Ourselves and all we have had experience of,
Mounting to Him in love's perpetual fire.

12.

A dream there is wherein we are fain to scream,
While struggling with ourselves we cannot speak :
And much of all our waking life, as weak
And misconceived, eludes us like the dream.
For half life's seemings are not what they seem,
And vain the laughs we laugh, the shrieks we shriek ;
Yea, all is vain that mars the settled meek
Contented quiet of our daily theme.
When I was young I deemed that sweets are sweet :
But now I deem some searching bitters are
Sweeter than sweets, and more refreshing far,
And to be relished more, and more desired,
And more to be pursued on eager feet,
• • On feet untired, and still on feet though tired.

13.

Shame is a shadow cast by sin : yet shame
 Itself may be a glory and a grace,
 Refashioning the sin-disfashioned face ,
A nobler bruit than hollow-sounded fame,
A new-lit lustre on a tarnished name,
 One virtue pent within an evil place,
 Strength for the fight, and swiftness for the race,
A stinging salve, a life-requickening flame.
A salve so searching we may scarcely live,
 A flame so fierce it seems that we must die,
 An actual cautery thrust into the heart :
 Nevertheless, men die not of such smart ;
And shame gives back what nothing else can give,
 " Man to himself,—then sets him up on high.

14.

When Adam and when Eve left Paradise
Did they love on and cling together still,
Forgiving one another all that ill
The twain had wrought on such a different wise?
She propped upon his strength, and he in guise
Of lover though of lord, girt to fulfil
Their term of life and die when God should will;
Lie down and sleep, and having slept arise.
Boast not against us, O our enemy!
To-day we fall, but we shall rise again;
We grope to-day, to-morrow we shall see:
What is to-day that we should fear to-day?
A morrow cometh which shall sweep away.
Thee and thy realm of change and death and pain.

15.

Let woman fear to teach and bear to learn,
• Remembering the first woman's first mistake.
• Eve had for pupil the inquiring snake,
• Whose doubts she answered on a great concern ;
But he the tables so contrived to turn,
• It next was his to give and her's to take ;
• Till man deemed poison sweet for her sweet sake,
And fired a train by which the world must burn.
Did Adam love his Eve from first to last ?
• I think so ; as we love who works us ill,
• And wounds us to the quick, yet loves us still.
Love pardons the unpardonable past :
• Love in a dominant embrace holds fast
• His frailer self, and saves without her will.

16.

Our teachers teach that one and one make two :
Later, Love rules that one and one make one :
Abstruse the problems ! neither need we shun,
But skilfully to each should yield its due.
The narrower total seems to suit the few,
The wider total suits the common run ;
Each obvious in its sphere like moon or sun ;
Both provable by me, and both by you.
Befogged and witless, in a wordy maze
A groping stroll perhaps may do us good ;
If cloyed we are with much we have understood,
If tired of half our dusty world and ways,
If sick of fasting, and if sick of food ;—
And how about these long still-lengthening days ?

17.

Something this foggy day, a something which
Is neither of this fog nor of to-day,
Has set me dreaming of the winds that play
Past certain cliffs, along one certain beach,
And turn the topmost edge of waves to spray :
Ah pleasant pebbly strand so far away,
So out of reach while quite within my reach,
As out of reach as India or Cathay !
I am sick of where I am and where I am not,
I am sick of foresight and of memory,
I am sick of all I have and all I see,
I am sick of self, and there is nothing new ;
Oh weary impatient patience of my lot !—
Thus with myself: how fares it, Friends, with you?

18.

So late in Autumn half the world's asleep,
And half the wakeful world looks pinched and pale;
For dampness now, not freshness, rides the gale;
And cold and colourless comes ashore the deep
With tides that bluster or with tides that creep;
Now veiled uncouthness wears an uncouth veil
Of fog, not sultry haze; and blight and bale
Have done their worst, and leaves rot on the heap.
So late in Autumn one forgets the Spring,
Forgets the Summer with its opulence,
The callow birds that long have found a wing,
The swallows that more lately gat them hence:
Will anything like Spring, will anything
Like Summer, rouse one day the slumbering sense?

19.

Here now 'is Winter. Winter, after all,
Is not so drear as was my boding dream
While Autumn gleamed its latest watery gleam
On sapless leafage too inert to fall.
Still leaves and berries clothe my garden wall
Where ivy thrives on scantiest sunny beam;
Still here a bird and there a blossom seen,
Hopeful, and robin still is musical.
Leaves, flowers and fruit and one delightful song
Remain; these days are short, but now the nights
Intense and long, hang out their utmost lights;
Such starry nights are long, yet not too long;
Frost nips the weak, while strengthening still the strong.
Against that day when Spring sets all to rights,

20.

A hundred thousand birds salute the day :—
One solitary bird salutes the night :
Its mellow grieving wiles our grief away,
And tunes our weary watches to delight ;
It seems to sing the thoughts we cannot say,
To know and sing them, and to set them right ;
Until we feel once more that May is May,
And hope some buds may bloom without a blight.
This solitary bird outweighs, outvies,
The hundred thousand merry-making birds
Whose innocent warblings yet might make us wise “
Would we but follow when they bid us rise,
• Would we but set their notes of praise to words
And launch our hearts up with them to the skies.

21.

A host of things I take on trust : I take
The nightingales on trust, for few and far
Between those actual summer moments are
When I have heard what melody they make.
So chanced it once at Como on the Lake :
But all things, then, waxed musical ; each star
Sang on its course, each breeze sang on its car,
All harmonies sang to senses wide awake.
All things in tune, myself not out of tune,
Those nightingales were nightingales indeed :
Yet truly an owl had satisfied my need,
And wrought a rapture underneath that moon,
Or simple sparrow chirping from a reed ;
For June that night glowed like a doubled June.

22.

The mountains in their overwhelming might
' Moved me to sadness when I saw them first,
And afterwards they moved me to delight ;
Struck harmonies from silent chords which burst
Out into song, a song by memory nursed ;
For ever unrenewed by touch or sight
Sleeps the keen magic of each day or night,
In pleasure and in wonder then immersed.
All Switzerland behind us on the ascent,
All Italy before us we plunged down
St. Gothard, garden of forget-me-not :
Yet why should such a flower choose such a spot ?
Could we forget that way which once we went
Though not one flower had bloomed to weave its
crown ?

Beyond the seas we know, stretch seas unknown,
 • Blue and bright-coloured for our dim and green.
 • Beyond the lands we see, stretch lands unseen
 With many-tinted tangle overgrown;
 And icebound seas there are like seas of stone,
 Serenely stormless as death lies serene;
 And lifeless tracts of sand, which intervene
 Betwixt the lands where living flowers are blown.
 This dead and living world befits our case
 Who live and die : we live in wearied hope,
 We die in hope not dead ; we run a race
 To-day, and find no present halting-place ;
 All things we see lie far within our scope,
 And still we peer beyond with craving face.

24.

They wise do send their hearts before them to
 Fear blessed Heaven, despite the veil between ;
 The foolish nurse their hearts within the screen
 Of this familiar world, where all we do
 Or have is old, for there is nothing new :
 Yet elder far that world we have not seen ;
 God's Presence antedates what else hath been :
 Many the foolish seem, the wise seem few.
 Oh foolishest fond folly of a heart
 Divided, neither here nor there at rest !
 That hankers after Heaven, but clings to earth ;
 That neither here nor there knows thorough mirth,
 Half-choosing, wholly missing, the good part :—
 .. Oh fool among the foolish, in thy quest.

25.

When we consider what this life we lead
Is not, and is : how full of toil and pain,
How blank of rest and of substantial gain,
Beset by hunger earth can never feed,
And propping half our hearts upon a reed ;
We cease to mourn lost treasures, mourned in vain,
Lost treasures we are fain and yet not fain
To fetch back for a solace of our need.
For who that feel this burden and this strain,
This wide vacuity of hope and heart,
Would bring their cherished well-beloved again :
To bleed with them and wince beneath the smart.
To have with stinted bliss such lavish bane,
To hold in lieu of all so poor a part ?

26.

This Life is full of numbness and of balk,
Of haltingness and baffled short-coming,
Of promise unfulfilled, of everything
That is puffed vanity and empty talk :
Its very bud hangs cankered on the stalk,
Its very song-bird trails a broken wing,
Its very Spring is not indeed like Spring,
But sighs like Autumn round an aimless walk.
This Life we live is dead for all its breath ;
Death's self it is, set off on pilgrimage,
Travelling with tottering steps the first short stage
The second stage is one more desert dust
Where Death sits veiled amid creation's rust :-
Unveil thy face, O Death who art not Death.

27.

I have dreamed of Death :—what will it be to die

‘Not in a dream, but in the literal truth

‘ With all Death’s adjuncts ghastly and uncouth,
The pang that is the last and the last sigh ?

Too dulled, it may be, for a last good-bye,

Too comfortless for any one to soothe,

A helpless charmless spectacle of ruth

Through long last hours, so long while yet they fly.

So long to those who hopeless in their fear

‘ Watch the slow breath and look for what they
‘ dread :

While I supine with ears that cease to hear,

With eyes that glaze, with heart pulse running
down

(Alas ! no saint rejoicing on her bed),

May miss the goal at last, may miss a crown.

28.

In life our absent friend is far away :
But death may bring our friend exceeding near,
Show him familiar faces long so dear
And lead him back in reach of words we say.
He only cannot utter yea or nay
In any voice accustomed to our ear ;
He only cannot make his face appear
And turn the sun back on our shadowed day.
The dead may be around us, dear and dead ;
The unforgotten dearest dead may be
Watching us with unslumbering eyes and heart :
Brimful of words which cannot yet be said,
Brimful of knowledge they may not impart,
Brimful of love for you and love for me.

FOR THINE OWN SAKE, O MY GOD."

WEARIED of sinning, wearied of repentance,
 Wearied of self, I turn, my God, to Thee ;
 To Thee, my Judge, on Whose all-righteous sentence
 Hangs mine eternity :
 I turn to Thee, I plead Thyself with Thee,—
 "Be pitiful to me.

Wearied I loathe myself, I loathe my sinning,
 My stains, my festering sores, my misery :
 Thou the Beginning, Thou ere my beginning
 Didst see and didst foresee
 Me, miserable, me sinful, ruined me,—
 I plead Thyself with Thee.

I plead Thyself with Thee Who art my Maker,
 Regard Thy handiwork that cries to Thee ;
 I plead Thyself with Thee Who wast partaker
 Of mine infirmity,
 Love made Thee what Thou art, the love of me,—
 I plead Thyself with Thee.

UNTIL THE DAY BREAK:

WHEN will the day bring its pleasure?
 When will the night bring its rest?
 Reaper and gleaner and thresher
 Peer toward the east and the west:—
 The Sower He knoweth, and He knoweth best.

Meteors flash forth and expire,
 Northern lights kindle and pale;
 These are the days of desire,
 Of eyes looking upward that fail;
 Vanishing days as a finishing tale.

Bows down the crop in its glory
 Tenfold, fiftyfold, hundredfold;
 The miller is ripened and hoary,
 The wheat ears are ripened to gold:—
 Why keep us waiting in dimness and cold?

The Lord of the harvest, He knoweth
Who knoweth the first and the last :
The Sower Who patiently soweth,
He scanneth the present and past :
He saith, "What thou hast, what remaineth, hold
fast."

Yet, Lord, o'er Thy toil-wearied weepers
The storm-clouds hang muttering and frown :
On threshers and gleaners and reapers,
O Lord of the harvest, look down ;
Oh for the harvest, the short, and the crown !

"Not so," saith the Lord of the reapers,
The Lord of the first and the last :
"O My toilers, My weary, My weepers,
What ye have, what remaineth, hold fast.
Hide in My heart till the vengeance be past."

‘OF HIM THAT WAS’ READY TO PERISH.”

LORD, I am waiting, weeping, watching for Thee :
My youth and hope lie by me buried and dead,
My wandering love hath not where to lay its head
Except Thou say “Come to Me.”

My noon is ended, abolished from life and light,
My noon is ended, ended and done away,
My sun went down in the hours that still were day,
And my lingering day is night.

How long, O Lord, how long in my desperate pain
Shall I weep and watch, shall I weep and long for
Thee ?

Is Thy grace ended, Thy love cut off from me ?
How long shall I long in vain ?

O God Who before the beginning hast seen the end,
Who hast made me flesh and blood, not frost and
not fire,
Who hast filled me full of needs and love and
desire
And a heart that craves a friend,

Who hast said "Come to Me and I will give thee rest,"

Who hast said "Take on thee My yoke and learn
of Me,"

Who calledst a little child to come to Thee,

And pillowedst John on Thy breast ;

Who spak'st to women that followed Thee sorrowing,

Bidding them weep for themselves and weep for
their own ;

Who didst welcome the outlaw adoring Thee all
alone,

And plight Thy word as a King,—

By Thy love of these and of all that ever shall be,

By Thy love of these and of all the born and
unborn,

Turn Thy gracious eyes on me and think no scorn

Of me, not even of me.

Beside Thy Cross I hang on my cross in shame,

My wounds, weakness, extremity cry to Thee :

Bid me also to Paradise, also me

For the glory of Thy Name.

"BEHOLD THE MAN!"

SHALL Christ hang on the Cross, and we not look?
 Heaven, earth and hell stood gazing at the first,
 While Christ for long-cursed man was counted

cursed ;

Christ, God and Man, Whom God the Father strook
 And shamed and sifted and one while forsook :—

Cry shame upon our bodies we have nursed

In sweets, our souls in pride, our spirits immersed
 In wilfulness, our steps run all acrook.

Cry shame upon us ! for He bore our shame

In agony, and we look on at ease

With neither hearts on flame nor cheeks on flame :

What hast thou, what have I, to do with peace?

Not to send peace but send a sword He came,

And fire and fasts and tearful night-watches.

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS.

IS this the Face that thrills with awe
Seraphs who veil their face above?
Is this the Face without a flaw,
The Face that is the Face of Love?
Yea, this defaced, a lifeless clod,
Hath all création's love sufficed,
Hath satisfied the love of God,
This Face the Face of Jesus Christ.

"IT IS FINISHED."

DEAR Lord, let me recount to Thee
Some of the great things Thou hast
done
For me, even me
Thy little one.

It was not I that cared for Thee,—
But Thou didst set Thy heart upon
Me, even me
Thy little one.

And therefore was it sweet to Thee
To leave Thy Majesty and Throne,
And grow like me
A Little One,

A swaddled Baby on the knee
Of a dear Mother of Thine own,
Quite weak like me
Thy little one.

"IT IS FINISHED."

Thou didst assume my misery,
 And reap the harvest I had sown,
 Comforting me
 Thy little one.

Jerusalem and Galilee,—
 Thy love embraced not those alone,
 But also me
 Thy little one.

Thy unblemished Body on the Tree
 Was bared and broken to atone
 For me, for me
 Thy little one.

Thou lovedst me upon the Tree,—
 Still me, hid by the ponderous stone,
 Me always,—me
 Thy little one.

And love of me arose with Thee
 When death and hell lay overthrown :
 Thou lovedst me
 Thy little one.

And love of me went up with Thee
To sit upon Thy Father's Throne :
Thou lovest me
Thy little one.

Lord, as Thou me, so would I Thee
Love in pure love's communion,
For Thou lov'st me
Thy little one :

Which love of me bring back with Thee
To Judgment, when the Trump is blown,
Still loving me
Thy little one.

AN EASTER CAROL.

SPRING bursts to-day,
 For Christ is risen and all the earth's
 at play.

Flash forth, thou Sun,
 The rain is over and gone, its work is done.

Winter is past,
 Sweet Spring is come at last, is come at last.

Bud, Fig and Vine,
 Bud, Olive, fat with fruit and oil and wine.

Break forth this morn
 In roses, thou but yesterday a Thorn.

Uplift thy head,
 O pure white Lily through the Winter dead.

Beside your dams
 Leap and rejoice, you merry-making Lambs.

• All Herds and Flocks
Rejoice, all Beasts of thickets and of rocks.

• Sing, Creatures, sing,
Angels and Men and Birds and everything.

• All notes of Doves
Fill all our world : this is the time of loves.

"BEHOLD A SHAKING."

I.

MAN rising to the doom that shall not err,—
 Which hath most dread : the arouse of all or
 each ;
 All kindreds of all nations of all speech,
 Or one by one of *him* and *him* and *her* ?
 While dust reanimate begins to stir
 Here, there, beyond, beyond, reach beyond reach ;
 While every wave refashions on the beach
 Alive or dead-in-life some seafarer.
 Now meeting doth not join or parting part ;
 True meeting and true parting wait till then,
 When whoso meet are joined for evermore,
 Face answering face and heart at rest in heart :—
 God bring us all rejoicing to the shore
 Of happy Heaven, His sheep home to the pen.

2.

Blessed that flock safe penned in Paradise ;
 Blessed this flock which tramps in weary ways ;
 All form one flock, God's flock ; all yield Him
 praise
 By joy or pain, still tending toward the prize.
 Joy speaks in praises there, and sings and flies
 Where no night is, exulting all its days ;
 Here, pain finds solace, for, behold, it prays ;
 In both love lives the life that never dies.
 Here life is the beginning of our death,
 And death the starting-point whence life ensues ;
 Surely our life is death, our death is life :
 Nor need we lay to heart our peace or strife,
 But calm in faith and patience breathe the breath
 God gave, to take again when He shall choose.

'ALL SAINTS.

THEY are flocking from the East
 And the West,
 They are flocking from the North
 And the South,
 Every moment setting forth
 From realm of snake or lion,
 Swamp or sand,
 Ice or burning ;
 Greatest and least,
 Palm in hand
 And praise in mouth,
 They are flocking up the path
 To their rest,
 Up the path that hath
 No returning ,
 Up the steeps of Zion
 They are mounting,
 Coming, coming,
 Throngs beyond man's counting ;

With a sound
 Like innumerable bees
 Swarming, humming
 Where flowering trees
 Many tinted,
 Many scented,
 All alike abound
 With honey,—
 With a swell
 Like a blast upswaying unrestrainable
 From a shadowed dell
 To the hill-tops sunny,—
 With a thunder
 Like the ocean when in strength
 Breadth and length
 It sets to shore ;
 More and more
 Waves on waves redoubled pour
 Leaping flashing to the shore
 (Unlike the under
 Drain of ebb that loseth ground
 For all its roar).
 .
 They are thronging
 From the East and West,
 From the North and South,

Saints are clanking, loving, longing,
To their land
Of rest,
Palm in hand
And praise in mouth.

“TAKE CARE OF HIM.”

‘THOU whom I love, for whom I died,
• Lovest thou Me, My bride?”—
• Low on my knees I love Thee, Lord;
, Believed in and adored.

• • •
• “That I love thee the proof is plain :
How dost thou love again ?”—
• In prayer, in toil, in earthly loss,
• In a long-carried cross.

“Yea, thou dost love : yet one adept
• Brings more for Me to accept.”—
I mould my will to match with Thine,
My wishes I resign.

“Thou givest much ; then give the whole
• For solace of My soul.”—
More would I give, if I could get :
• But, Lord, what lack I yet ?

“In Me thou lovest Me : I call
Thee to love Me in all.”—
Brim full my heart, dear Lord, that so
My love may overflow.

Love Me in sinners and in saints,
In each who needs or faints.”—
Lord, I will love Thee as I can
In every brother man.

“All sore, all crippled, all who ache,
Tend all for My dear sake.”—
All for Thy sake, Lord : I will see
In every sufferer Thee.

“So I at last, upon My Throne
Of glory, Judge alone,
So I at last will say to thee :
Thou diddest it to Me.”

A MARTYR:

THE VIGIL OF THE FEAST.

INNER not outer, without gnash of teeth
 Or weeping, save quiet sobs of some who pray
 And feel the Everlasting Arms beneath,—
 Blackness of darkness this, but not for aye;
 Darkness that even in gathering fleeteth fast,
 Blackness of blackest darkness close to day.
 Lord Jesus, through Thy darkened pillar cast,
 Thy gracious eyes all-seeing cast on me
 Until this tyranny be overpast.
 Me, Lord, remember who remember Thee,
 And cleave to Thee, and see Thee without sight,
 And choose Thee still in dire extremity,
 And in this darkness worship Thee my Light,
 And Thee my Life adore in shadow of death,
 Thee loved by day, and still beloved by night.
 It is the Voice of my Beloved that saith:
 “I am the Way, the Truth, the Life; I go
 Whither that soul knows well that followeth”—

O Lord, I follow, little as I know ;
 At this eleventh hour I rise and take
 My life into my hand, and follow so,
 With tears and heart-misgivings and heart ache ;
 Thy feeblest follower, yet Thy follower
 Indomitable, for Thine only sake.
 To-night I gird my will afresh, and stir
 My strength, and brace my heart to do and dare,
 Marvelling : Will to-morrow wake the whirr
 Of the great rending wheel ; or from his lair
 Startle the jubilant lion in his rage,
 Or clench the headsman's hand within my hair,
 Or kindle fire to speed my pilgrimage,
 Chariot of fire and horses of sheer fire
 Whirling me home to heaven by one fierce stage ?—
 Thy Will I will, I Thy desire desire ;
 Let not the waters close above my head,
 Uphold me that I sink not in this mire :
 For flesh and blood are frail and sore afraid ;
 And young I am, unsatisfied and young,
 With memories, hopes, with cravings all unfed,
 My song half sung, its sweetest note unsung,
 All plans cut short, all possibilities,
 ' Because my cord of life is soon unstrung.
 Was I a careless woman set at ease
 That this so bitter cup is brimmed to me ?

Had mine own vintage settled on the lees?
 A word, a puff of smoke, would set me free;
 A word, a puff of smoke, over and gone : . . .
 Howbeit, whom have I, Lord, in heaven but Thee?
 Yea, only Thee my choice is fixed upon
 In heaven or earth, eternity or time :—
 Lord, hold me fast, Lord, leave me not alone,
 Thy silly heartless dove that sees the lime
 Yet almost flutters to the tempting bough;
 Cover me, hide me, pluck me from this crime.
 A word, a puff of smoke, would save me now : . .
 But who, my God, would save me in the day
 Of Thy fierce anger? only Saviour Thou.
 Preoccupy my heart, and turn away
 And cover up mine eyes from frantic fear,
 And stop mine ears lest I be driven astray :
 For one stands ever dinning in mine ear
 How my gray Father withers in the blight
 Of love for me, who cruel am and dear,
 And how my Mother through this lingering night
 Until the day, sits tearless in her woe,
 Loathing for love of me the happy light
 Which brings to pass a concourse and a show
 To glut the hungry faces merciless,
 The thousand faces swaying to and fro,
 Feasting on me unveiled in helplessness

Alone, yet not alone : Lord, stand by me
 As once, by lonely Paul in his distress.
 As blossoms to the sun I turn to Thee ;
 Thy dove turns to her window, think no scorn ;
 As one dove, to an ark on shoreless sea,
 To Thee I turn mine eyes, my heart forlorn ;
 Put forth Thy scarred right Hand, kind Lord, take
 hold
 Of me Thine all-forsaken Dove who mourn :
 For Thou hast loved me since the days of old,
 And I love Thee Whom loving I will love
 Through life's short fever-fits of heat and cold ;
 Thy Name will I extol and sing thereof,
 Will flee for refuge to Thy Blessed Name.
 Lord, look upon me from Thy bliss above :
 Look down on me, who shrink from all the shame
 And pangs and desolation of my death,
 Wrenched piecemeal or devoured or set on flame,
 While all the world around me holds its breath
 With eyes glued on me for a gazing-stock,
 Pitiless eyes, while no man pitieth.
 The floods are risen, I stagger in their shock,
 My heart reels and is faint, I fail, I faint :
 My God, set Thou me up upon the rock,
 Thou Who didst long ago Thyself acquaint
 With death, our death ; Thou Who didst long ago

Pour forth Thy soul for sinner and for saint.
 Bear me in spirit, whom no one else will know ;
 Thou Whom Thy friends forsook, take Thou my
 part,
 Of all forsaken in mine overthrow ;
 Carry me in Thy bosom, in Thy heart,
 Carry me out of darkness into light,
 To-morrow make me see Thee as Thou art.
 Lover and friend Thou hidest from my sight :—
 Alas, alas, mine earthly love, alas,
 For whom I thought to don the garments white
 And white wreath of a bride, this rugged pass
 Hath utterly divorced me from thy care ;
 Yea, I am to thee as a shattered glass
 Worthless, with no more beauty lodging there,
 Abhorred, lest I involve thee in my doom :
 For sweet are sunshine and this upper air,
 And life and youth are sweet, and give us room
 For all most sweetest sweetnesses we taste :
 Dear, what hast thou in common with a tomb ?
 I bow my head in silence, I make haste
 Alone, I make haste out into the dark,
 My life and youth and hope all run to waste.
 Is this my body cold and stiff and stark,
 Ashes made ashes, earth becoming earth,
 Is this a prize for man to make his mark ?

Am I that^a very I who^a laughed in mirth^a
 A while ago, a little^e little while,
 Yet all the while a-dying since my birth?
 Now am I tired, too tired to strive or smile;
 I sit alone, my mouth is in the dust:
 Look Thou upon me, Lord, for I am vile.
 In Thee is all my hope, is all my trust,
 On Thee I centre all my self that dies,
 And self that di^s's not with its mortal crust,
 But sleeps and wakes, and in the end will rise
 With hymns and hallelujahs on its lips,
 Thee loving with the love that^s satisfies.
 As once in Thine unutterable eclipse
 The sun and moon grew dark for sympathy,
 And earth cowered quaking underneath the drips
 Of Thy slow Blood priceless exceedingly,
 So now a little spare me, and show forth
 Some^e pity, O my God, some pity of me.
 If trouble comes not from the south or north,
 But meted to us by Thy tender hand,
 Let me not in Thine eyes be nothing worth:
 Behold me where in agony I stand,
 Behold me no man caring for my soul.
 And take me to Thee in the far-off land,
 Shorten the race and lift me to the goal.

WHY?

LORD, if I love Thee and Thou lovest me,
 Why need I any more these toilsome days;
 Why should I not run singing up Thy ways
 Straight into heaven, to rest myself with Thee?
 What need remains of death-pang yet to be,
 If all my soul is quickened in Thy praise;
 If all my heart loves Thee, what need the amaze,
 Struggle and dimness of an agony?—
 Bride whom I love, if thou too lovest Me,
 Thou needs must choose My Likeness for thy dower:
 So wilt thou toil in patience, and abide
 Hungering and thirsting for that blessed hour
 When I My Likeness shall behold in thee,
 And thou therein shalt waken satisfied.

LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH.

"I HAVE not sought Thee, I have not found Thee,
 I have not thirsted for Thee:
 And now cold billows of death surround me,
 Buffeting billows of death astound me,—
 Wilt Thou look upon, wilt Thou see
 Thy perishing me?"

"Yea, I have sought thee, yea, I have found thee,
 Yea, I have thirsted for thee,
 Yea, long ago with love's bands I bound thee:
 Now the Everlasting Arms surround thee,—
 Thro'gh death's darkness I look and see
 And clasp thee to Me."

